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RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

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FLAVEL S. COOK







**‘RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.’**



# 'RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.'

*SIX LECTURES*

ON

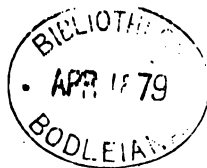
FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

PREACHED IN THE LOCK CHAPEL, DURING LENT, 1878.

BY

FLAVEL S. COOK, B.A.,

CHAPLAIN OF THE LOCK HOSPITAL, LONDON.



SEELEY, JACKSON, & HALLIDAY, 54, FLEET STREET,  
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**SIX LECTURES**  
**ON**  
**FUTURE PUNISHMENT.**



# LECTURES ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

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## LECTURE I.

### HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE.

‘Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.’—1 THESS. i. 10.

MUCH has been spoken and written, of late, concerning *future punishment*; you may have been to some extent disturbed or perplexed by what you have read or heard; at all events, you have a right to such help as I may be able to give you for the studious consideration of this subject. I may take for granted that you have been accustomed to believe that ‘they that have done evil’ shall go away into punishment which is to be *everlasting*, and that this is the declaration of Holy Scripture: now you find this belief attacked from various quarters, and denounced in violent language, as contrary to Scripture, morality, conscience, reason, and the faith both

of the Jews and of early Christians, who are said to have held a milder and a truer creed. A slight sketch of the history of the doctrine will be in place to-day, as an introduction to the lectures which are to follow.

The Old Testament does not speak as fully and clearly as the New Testament does concerning the states of the righteous and the wicked after this life; which is accounted for by the fact that 'our Saviour hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel' (2 Tim. i. 10); yet there are passages which point to happiness and to woe hereafter, such as—'As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness' (Ps. xvii. 15). 'The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death' (Prov. xiv. 32). 'Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (Dan. xii. 2).

Continued existence after death, and judgment in the unseen world, according to the deeds done in the body, were doctrines fully believed by the Egyptians among whom the Israelites dwelt for

some hundreds of years; these articles of faith must have been well known to Moses and the Hebrew people long before any book of the Old Testament was written; that the ancient Egyptians did believe these doctrines is proved by their own writings and paintings, which have been preserved to this day, and are to be seen in our great Museum and other collections of antiquities. These writings are believed to be copies of still older ones reaching back to times before Abraham, and the description given of future punishment is as terrible as can be imagined. The ancient Babylonians also believed that there are two places to which the spirits of men go after death; in fact, a heaven and a hell, and that hell is a place of darkness and torment. Assyrian inscriptions setting forth this belief are also in our Museum, and represent most ancient religious ideas.

The oldest uninspired Jewish books, written in the time between the last of the prophets and the death of St. John, make mention of resurrection and judgment, with everlasting punishment of the wicked. We read in—

2 Esdras xiv. 35: 'For after death shall the judg-



ment come, when we shall live again : and then shall the names of the righteous be manifest, and the works of the ungodly shall be declared.'

Judith xvi. 17 : ' Woe to the nations that rise up against my kindred ! the Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, in putting fire and worms in their flesh ; and they shall feel them, and weep for ever.' [Date of Judith 2nd century B.C.]

Ecclesiasticus vii. 17 : ' Humble thy soul greatly ; for the vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms.' [Date, 2nd century or earlier B.C.]

Ecclesiasticus xxi. 9 : ' The congregation of the wicked is like tow wrapped together ; and the end of them is a flame of fire to destroy them.'

2 Maccabees vii. 14, 36 : ' It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by Him : as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life. For our brethren, who now have suffered a short pain, are dead under God's covenant of everlasting life : but thou, through the judgment of God, shalt receive just punishment for thy pride.'

4 Maccabees ix. 9 : ' But you, on account of the

wilful foul murder of us, shall suffer from Divine vengeance eternal torment by fire.' x. 10: 'But you, for your impiety and foul murders, shall endure interminable torments.' xi. 19: 'I shall soon die, and so will you, O tyrant, having brought upon yourself a severe avenging fiend.' xii. 10: 'The Divine vengeance is keeping you in store for a more intense and eternal fire and torments, which shall not cease from you for ever.' [Date, A.D. 67?]

5 Maccabees v. 48-51: 'Now we are on our way to a life which death shall never follow; and shall dwell in light which darkness shall never put away. But your dwelling shall be in the infernal regions, with exquisite punishments from God. . . . You He will torment in this world, and bring you to a wretched death; and that afterwards you will depart into eternal torments.' [Date, after A.D. 70?]

The Book of Enoch xxii. 11, 12, 14: 'And in the same way likewise are sinners separated when they die, and are buried in the earth; judgment not overtaking them in their life-time. Here their souls are separated. Moreover, abundant is their suffering until the time of the great judgment, the

castigation, and the torment of those who eternally execrate, whose souls are punished and bound there for ever. A receptacle of this sort has been formed for the souls of unrighteous men, and of sinners ; of those who have committed crime, and associated with the impious, whom they resemble. Their souls shall not be annihilated in the day of judgment, neither shall they arise from this place.' lxii. 14 : ' But that prevents us not from descending to the flaming womb of hell.' xc. 8, 11 : ' The holy Lord shall go forth in wrath, and upon them all shall great punishment from heaven be inflicted. . . . They shall be brought from every part of the earth, and be cast into a judgment of fire. They shall perish in wrath, and by a judgment overpowering them for ever. . . . While with disgrace, with slaughter, and in extreme penury, shall their spirits be thrust into a furnace of fire.' cii. 5 : ' But you, ye sinners, are for ever accursed ; to you there shall be no peace.' ciii. 3, 4, 5 : ' The spirits of you who die in righteousness shall exist and rejoice. . . . Woe to you, sinners, when you die in your sins ! and they who are like you say respecting you, Blessed are these sinners. . . . Has it not

been shown to them, that to the receptacle of the dead their souls shall be made to descend, their evil deeds shall become their greatest torment? Into darkness, into the snare, and into the flame which shall burn to the great judgment, shall their spirits enter; and the great judgment shall be for every generation, even for ever.' cv. 21, 22, 23, 26: 'They shall cry out and lament in the invisible waste, and in the bottomless fire shall they burn. . . . The clamour of exclamation, of woe, and of great suffering. He said, There into that place which thou beholdest shall be thrust the spirits of sinners and blasphemers; of those who shall do evil. . . . Righteous is the judgment of God.'

[The Book of Enoch is believed to have been written by a Jew in the time of Herod, not long before the birth of our Lord.]

Josephus, 'Antiquities of the Jews,' xviii., cap. i. 3, 5: 'Now for the Pharisees; . . . they also believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison. . . .

The doctrine of the Essenes is this, that all things are best ascribed to God. They teach the immortality of souls.'

The Talmud, which, roughly speaking, was a growth of the first few centuries after the beginning of the Christian era, is claimed by some who oppose the doctrine of everlasting punishment as being on their side. I find one saying, 'There is not a word in the Talmud that lends any support to that dogma of endless torment.' Another writes thus: 'I have referred to the principal passages of the Talmud bearing upon the question.' He quotes two notable sentences:—

'But unbelievers, etc., go down into Gehenna, and are adjudged therein for generation after generation.'

He adds, 'This phrase does not, I think, imply endless punishment. All who go down into Gehenna rise up again, with the exception of those who go down and do not rise, the adulterer, etc.'

This *exception* you will probably think a very important one! He then collects the opinions of rabbis, some dead, some living, to show that the Jews have no authoritative teaching on the subject

of future punishment; that while some have held that it will be everlasting, and others that it will be annihilation, a prevalent opinion has been that it will last only for a year, and that, at all events, many of their present chief teachers reject the belief of its endless duration. As to modern Jewish rabbis and writers, it may be said without breach of charity, they are not safe guides; many things have influenced them to accept opinions widely differing from the teaching of their own sacred books. In the Targum of Jerusalem, which is as late perhaps as the seventh century of our era, it is said—

‘Two thousand years before He had created the world, He created the law, and prepared Gehinnam and the garden of Eden. . . . For the wicked He prepared Gehinnam, which is like the sharp consuming sword with two edges. He prepared in the depth of it flakes of fire and burning coals for the wicked, for their punishment for ever in the world to come, who have not kept the commandment of the law in this world.’

You have seen by quotations from ancient Jewish writings, that the language in *them* is in

many particulars strikingly like that used by our Lord ; and we are justified in concluding that when He spoke of outer darkness, fire unquenchable, worm undying, and everlasting punishment, He employed terms to which His hearers attached known significations, even as we do now, and that *they* did not suppose Him to mean by these and other like words of awful expressiveness (as some among us say He did) nothing more than fatherly correction in a temporary and reformatory school beyond the grave.

Keeping New Testament texts for consideration as they will come before us in these lectures, let us now see how the early Christian writers understood the doctrine of our Lord and His apostles concerning future punishment. We find in Ignatius' Epistle to the Ephesians (shorter Greek), 'Such an one becoming defiled shall go away into everlasting fire.' The same (longer Greek), 'How much more shall those suffer everlasting punishment, who endeavour to corrupt the Church of Christ !' [Date: Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, suffered martyrdom A.D. 107 or 116.] The Epistle of Barnabas, chap. xx. : 'The way of blackness is crooked and full of cursing. For

it is a way of eternal death with punishment.  
[Date, A.D. 70 to 131.]

The Epistle to Diognetus, chaps. vi., x.: 'The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle. . . . When thou shalt fear what is truly death, which is reserved for those who shall be condemned to the eternal fire, which shall afflict those even to the end that are committed to it.' [Date, second century, first half?]

Justin Martyr, First Apology, chap. xviii.: 'They died the death common to all, which, if it issued in insensibility, would be a god-send to the wicked. But since sensation remains to all who have ever lived, and eternal punishment is laid up (for the wicked, *i.e.*), see that ye neglect not to be convinced.' . . . xix.: 'And hell is a place where those are to be punished who have lived wickedly.' lii.: 'He shall raise the bodies of all men who have lived, and shall clothe those of the worthy with immortality, and shall send those of the wicked, endued with eternal sensibility, into everlasting fire with wicked devils. . . . And in what kind of sensation and punishment the wicked are to be, hear from what was said in like manner with reference to this; it is as follows: "Their worm shall not rest, and their



fire shall not be quenched;" and then shall they repent when it profits them not.' Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew, chap. xlv.: 'When some are sent to be punished unceasingly into judgment and condemnation of fire; but others shall exist in freedom from suffering, from corruption, and from grief, in immortality.' [Date: Justin is believed to have suffered martyrdom about A.D. 165.]

Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, i. 10, 1: 'He may administer just judgment to them all; that is, may both send into the everlasting fire the spiritual things of wickedness, as well as angels that have transgressed and passed into revolt, as the ungodly and unjust and lawless and blasphemous among men. . . . This preaching and this faith, the Church, as we said before, dispersed as she is in the whole world, keeps diligently, as though she dwelt but in one house.' ii. 28, 7: 'That eternal fire is prepared for sinners, both the Lord openly affirmed, and the other scriptures prove.' v. 27, 2: 'Now separation from God is death; . . . the good things from God being eternal and endless, the privation of them also is eternal and endless.' . . . xxviii. 1: 'Those on the left He will send into the fire everlasting;

for by themselves are they deprived of all good things.' [Date: Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, died about the end of the second century.]

Clemens Alexandrinus, 'Exhortation to the Heathen,' chap. ix.: 'You wait for punishment, and prefer the fire which the Lord "has prepared for the devil and his angels."'

The 'Instructor,' iii. chap. xi: 'Leading to the fire which will never cease, in consequence of sin.' [Date: died about A.D. 220.]

Minucius Felix, 'The Octavius,' chap. xxxv.: 'Nor is there either measure or termination to these torments.' [Date: second or third century.]

Hippolytus, 'Refutation of all Heresies,' Book x. chap. xxx: 'You shall escape the approaching threat of fire of judgment, . . . the boiling flood of hell's eternal lake of fire.' [Date: Bishop of Portus, martyr, died about 239 ?]

Cyprian to Demetrianus: 'An ever-burning Gehenna will burn up the condemned, and a punishment devouring with living flames; nor will there be any source whence at any time they may have either respite or end to their torments.' [Date of Cyprian's martyrdom, A.D. 258.]

Lactantius, 'Divine Institutes,' vii. 10: 'Eternal punishment, which the sacred writings call the second death, which is both eternal and full of the severest torments.' vii. 12: 'Death does not entirely extinguish and destroy, but visits with eternal torments. For the soul cannot entirely perish, since it received its origin from the Spirit of God, which is eternal.' vii. 21: 'The sacred writings inform us in what manner the wicked are to undergo punishment; . . . it will not be (in) that flesh with which God clothed man, like this our earthly body, but indestructible, and abiding for ever, that it may be able to hold out against tortures and everlasting fire.' [Date: end of third century, or beginning of fourth.]

Many more such quotations might be given from the same and from other early Christian authors, but I must be brief, and I purposely avoid coming lower down than about the end of the third century, with the exception of the following passage from the *Enchiridion* of Augustine, who died A.D. 430.

Chap. cxi.: 'The latter shall drag a miserable existence in eternal death without the power of dying; for the life and the death shall both be

without end.' cxii.: 'It is in vain, then, that some, indeed very many, make moan over the eternal punishment and perpetual unintermitted torments of the lost, and say they do not believe it shall be so; not, indeed, that they directly oppose themselves to Holy Scripture, but, at the suggestion of their own feelings, they soften down everything that seems hard, and give a milder term to statements which they think are rather designed to terrify than to be received as literally true. . . . But let them suppose, if the thought gives them pleasure, that the pains of the damned are, at certain intervals, in some degree assuaged.'

In Augustine's days, as well as before and since, there have been well-meaning persons saying of eternal punishment, 'they do not believe it shall be so.' Origen and Arnobius in the third century, Gregory of Nyssa and Ambrose in the fourth, are the most eminent among the ancients who are claimed as of this number. The 'fathers' were not unanimous, nor were they always consistent with themselves when treating of this matter; even Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, in some parts of their books are strangely at variance with the opinions

they have expressed in other places. One thing, however, is clear, that the early Christian writings furnish abundant proofs of the general belief, in the first few centuries, that the Holy Scriptures declare the future punishment of the lost to be everlasting.

It is easy to see that persons feeling bound to believe the certainty of future punishment, and at the same time being unwilling to think that any except the most wicked should be lost for ever, would be inclined to adopt a supposition of limited and purifying suffering; accordingly we find the notion of a purgatory, which was broached in a cautious way by Augustine, grew in form and in favour from age to age, until, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it became a completely defined and established article of belief that all souls, except the best and the worst, must remain for a season in purifying fires or pains, before they can be clean enough to enter the state of the blessed. Purgatory was forced in, wedge-like, between heaven and hell in the common theology; yet, great as was the space thus occupied by this notion of an intermediate state, the belief of everlasting punishment for the lost was not driven out. The Reformed Churches, returning

to the primitive faith, rejected purgatory, as being—to use the words of the Church of England in Article xxii.—‘a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.’ While they thus cast out purgatory, with its connected errors in doctrine and superstitions in practice, which had so long kept men from the joyful truth, that there is ‘no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,’ His perfect atonement having obtained perfect remission of all sins for all believers; they retained unshaken the original belief of everlasting punishment. Our own Church had for some time a 42nd article which affirmed in so many words, ‘All men shall not be saved at the length.’ That article having been taken away, some contend that the Church thereby practically rejected the doctrine of everlasting punishment; but this is a vain argument: the Articles do not profess to lay down *everything* which can be proved by Holy Scripture; and the Church’s mind as to this doctrine cannot be reasonably doubted when due attention is given to the fact that in the Church Catechism children are taught to say, ‘I pray that He will keep us from

everlasting death;' that the exhortation to Holy Communion warns, 'lest Satan bring you to destruction both of body and soul;' that the Athanasian Creed is kept, which states, 'They that have done evil (shall go) into everlasting fire;' that in the Burial Service we pray, 'Deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death;' and that once a week at the least we are called to join in this petition in the Litany, 'From Thy wrath and from everlasting damnation, Good Lord, deliver us.' It is also argued that our clergy are free to preach what they like on this subject. '*Free*' is a word of more than one meaning. The law of the land may not interfere with the liberty they *take* to deny what they dislike; but the Church's written standards remain to show what they are morally bound to teach.

From the days of Socinus and his followers in the sixteenth century, down to the present time, there have been some who denied or doubted the eternity of future punishment; but these, however eminent some of their names may be, represented only what may be termed side currents of opinion, the main stream all the while flowing in the same direction

as that marked by the quotations now given from most ancient Christian authors. The last ten or twelve years have been marked by an increasingly violent outbreak of opposition to the doctrine of everlasting punishment, often from unexpected quarters, and in curiously inconsistent forms, but this is not to be wondered at when we see at the same time assaults made, and frequently by the same hands, against prophecy, miracles, inspiration of Holy Scripture, the atonement, and the Godhead of our Lord and Saviour.

It has been shown by this sketch, that in making 'everlasting punishment' to mean punishment lasting for ever, we are not bringing in a new doctrine; we are in agreement with the general teaching of the Universal Church in all ages: This is not indeed a *proof* of truth, but they who oppose the main stream of Christian interpretation ought to have most convincing reasons for so doing; what the opponents in this case have to say for themselves, we shall consider in the following lectures.

It may be said, Theology is a progressive science; we may know more now in this matter than was known in early ages; and as to 'the general



teaching' of the Church, the Reformation itself was a decided departure from the common belief devoutly held by the majority of all Christians; nevertheless we believe that majority wrong, and the Protestant minority right; may it not be that in like manner there has been an ancient and all but universal error in believing future punishment to be everlasting, and that the comparatively few who deny this are, above all others, enlightened to see the truth? Our answer is, What Christians had in the second and third centuries, that we have in the nineteenth, namely, Holy Scripture; what they had to do, we must do; search the Scriptures, compare them, combine them, and by them strictly frame our belief, yes, and our speech. In some fields of sacred study we have found, and hope to find more, new materials for the enlargement of knowledge and the correction of errors; but in this matter before us, neither exploration, nor criticism, nor rare insight, nor happy accident can add *one* to the facts God has thought fit to reveal; and may He keep us from taking one away. As to the argument touching the Reformation, there is no likeness by which to make a comparison of that

case with this. Christians in the second and third centuries *did* know Holy Scripture, and bowed to its authority as supreme; therefore their liability to error was far less than that of Christians in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries who did *not* know the Scripture, and had been taught to regard the words of men as the oracles of truth. The Reformation was another name for returning to the Bible. There is now-a-day some talk of 'Bibles,' as if there were many; but to us, as there is but one God, so there is but one Bible,—God's word written.

·Turning to our text, we may be met by some such statement as this:—'The wrath to come,' which when St. Paul wrote was in the future is so no longer; it came and was spent on the Jewish nation at the destruction of their city; therefore, though the first Christians were saved by the Lord Jesus from that wrath, we have none such to fear, nor such deliverance to seek. Answer—That this is an error can be shown with certainty and ease by the testimony of prophets and apostles. In Rom. i. 18, and ii. 5, 9, the same apostle declares that wrath is to come for every soul of man, Jew and Gentile, that doeth evil;

and in Rev. vi, 14, 17, we find St. John taking up the prophecy of Isaiah xiii. 3, 13, and describing a day of doom more terrible than that of Jerusalem's fall, as on the kings of the earth, the rich and mighty, the bond and the free ; and that great day, foreseen in prophetic vision, is yet in the future. As ' there remaineth a rest to the people of God,' so for the ungodly and disobedient there remaineth ' wrath to come.' To Hebrews and to Greeks, to Saul of Tarsus and to you, there is but one—Jesus—who delivereth (for it is a present work) from wrath, and this He doeth by delivering from sin, and this again is by faith in His death for sinners, and in His resurrection from the dead (Rom, iii. 25, and x. 9). Trust His word and His work, believe the Father's love in giving His only-begotten Son to die, the just for the unjust, and then take with all thankfulness the joy of the assurance imparted by the Holy Ghost—' Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him ' (Rom. v. 9).

## LECTURE II.

### GENERAL OBJECTIONS.

‘Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?’—  
ROMANS ix. 20.

IN this lecture we shall have to consider various general objections against the doctrine of everlasting punishment. The answers must be short, but they will bear being enlarged in form.

First objection : *That everlasting punishment is inconsistent with Divine love.* This objection is perhaps the chief one, it has divers forms ; we will notice a few of them.

(a.) *That as ‘ God is love,’ perfect, boundless love, it cannot be believed He would bring creatures into this world on purpose to cast them for ever into a lake of fire already prepared for them.*

We do not call on men to believe this, we are

not taught in Holy Scripture that God created any human beings 'on purpose' to condemn them; on the contrary, we are told that they who are lost are so by their own sin against God. Everlasting fire was not prepared for them, but 'for the devil and his angels' (Matt. xxv. 41); they who follow Satan in his rebellion against God must share his punishment by God. Moreover, it is written again, 'God is a consuming fire,' and 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God' (Heb. xii. 29, x. 31). How 'fearful' we can partly see in His recorded acts,—the flood, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, the smiting of Egypt's king and people, the deadly strokes on Israel in the wilderness, and the destruction of the Canaanites, all which are distinctly said to be His own acts. That God is love did not prevent Him from executing His wrath in these terrible judgments on the ungodly in this world; so His inflicting yet 'much sorer punishment' in the world to come on evil-doers cannot be shown to be inconsistent with Divine love; that is, with love acting in harmony with all the other attributes of God, acting in His ways, if not in ours. It cannot be pleaded

that these examples being taken from the Old Testament are not fairly to be compared with God's dealings with men since the coming of the gracious gospel ; because what God was, that He is, and ever will be. Of Himself He says, 'I change not' (Mal. iii. 6).

(b.) *That it dishonours God, and is 'almost blasphemous, to suppose that He who made a human being with such rich capacities, will in one moment "throw it from Him into everlasting darkness."*

This form of the objection seems to suppose some rash or hasty passion in the Most High ; but whatever judgment He may pronounce on any sinner, it will be, it must be, with righteous reason. This argument, if good for anything, would go far to show that *no* such punishment will be inflicted as that declared by our Lord in Matt. xxii. 11-13, where He describes a 'human being,' whose 'rich capacities' had not been used aright, as bound and 'cast into outer darkness,' and that without the hint of 'one moment's' delay.

(c.) *That it dishonours God to represent Him as taking pleasure in causing and gazing on the everlasting misery of the lost.*

Perhaps so; but Holy Scripture does not so represent Him, neither does our Church so teach: we are not responsible for such misrepresentations of God in this matter as have been made by men with more fancy than wisdom or reverence. On the contrary, it is written in Ezek. xviii. 32, 'I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord; wherefore turn, and live ye.' Nevertheless, this feeling in the mind of God did not hinder Him from punishing the transgressors; and His question (Ezek. xxxiii. 11,) 'Why will ye die?' shows that, against His desire, their own evil will led them to death. The Son of man is He to whom all judgment is committed; He wept over Jerusalem, yet pronounced its coming doom, and that of its children within; He would have gathered them into safety, but they '*would not*;' they perished without remedy (Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke xix. 41-44).

(d.) *That God commands us to forgive our debtors all trespasses against us, therefore it cannot be thought He will be less forgiving of all trespasses against Himself.*

He *does* forgive all trespasses against Him, if we confess, repent, and believe in Him who died for

us ; this He declares He does and will do 'to-day, if ye will hear His voice' (Heb. iv. 7). To extend this proclamation of mercy to rebels beyond the 'to-day' of this life is more than any man has authority from his Maker to do. And woe to the disobedient who refuse or neglect to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God now, because they have been encouraged to think it may be time enough to make their submission hereafter in another world.

*(e.) That everlasting punishment cannot be true, because God is 'the Father of spirits,' and 'we are the offspring of God.' Now, as no earthly father would condemn his child to everlasting fire or misery, therefore He who is our heavenly Father will not.*

God is not only the Father, He is also the Judge, and, as Judge, will and must punish all sin. Moreover, we see His creatures suffering in this world from fire, wounds, pestilences, earthquakes, famines, shipwrecks, and a thousand other things. Although He is the Father, He causes or permits His offspring to suffer these dreadful calamities and agonising deaths, which an earthly father would not do. They who urge such an objection as this have need



to beware, for it leads to a denial of God's providence—nay, more, to a denial of there being a God ; for carried out fully it would say, If there were a God of love and power, as Christians think, it is impossible to believe that He would cause or allow hundreds of His innocent children to be destroyed in a moment by an earthquake : if He could not save them, He is not almighty ; if He could, but would not, then God is not love.

*2nd. That everlasting punishment is inconsistent with Divine justice ; for as all sin is finite (limited), being committed by finite creatures in time, which is itself finite, it would be unjust to punish sin with an infinite (unlimited) penalty in eternity ; and that there is no proportion between offences committed in this little span of present life and everlasting punishment in the future.*

Who told us that sin is finite ? Who knows its length and breadth, its depth and height ? The Holy One He alone knows the real nature of sin, the Righteous One He alone knows the just punishment of sin. The sin committed by our first parents was the act of moments, yet the deadly effects of

that brief sin have remained through all the ages, and fill the world. To say that sin committed in time ought not to be punished in eternity is like saying that crime committed in an hour ought not to be punished with a sentence the effect of which can never be undone; but crime is so punished by human law, and that approved by the conscience of mankind. Little heed is due to convicts when they presume to give their opinion as to what their own punishments ought to be or ought not to be. The lawgiver has to consider greater interests than theirs, and to act with a view to far wider and nobler ends than they have ever known.

3rd. *That everlasting punishment is inconsistent with the whole character of the Gospel, which is 'good tidings of great joy to all people,' 'good-will towards men,' whereas everlasting punishment is the reverse of 'good tidings' and 'good-will.'*

The Gospel is indeed good tidings to all of all tongues and of all times, inasmuch as it proclaims a Saviour for 'every one that believeth' (Rom. i. 16). But the same apostle, who was the chief and most joyous preacher of this Gospel, declares in the same

breath (Rom. i. 18), 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' It is worse than folly to shut our eyes and ears against *this* revelation, or to set one truth against the other truth, or to accept one and reject the other; to do this is like admiring the rainbow and refusing to see the cloud: it is in the cloud of judgment that God has set His bow of Gospel grace.

4th. *That everlasting punishment is inconsistent with God's assurances that 'He will not always chide, neither will He keep His anger for ever' (Ps. ciii. 9), that 'His anger endureth but a moment' (Ps. xxx. 5).*

This objection is an example of the false and mischievous practice (condemned in 20th Article) which tries to 'so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another.' If two passages or sets of passages seem to be in opposition, what we have to do is not to say that these texts or 'those texts are alien to the broad unifying principles of Scripture'; not to make one overpower or, as it were, drive out the other, but to see how we can take both in their full sense, for both have the

same authority. Apply this simple principle to the case before us: one set of texts declares God's anger to be short, the other set declares the punishment of evil-doers will be everlasting; how shall we accept both these? Easily—the former as referring to God's chastisements here, the latter to His punishments hereafter.

*5th. That the doctrine of everlasting punishment condemns the 'vast majority of mankind,' and is 'an anathema of all but universal perdition.'*

The Scriptures do not say so. Our Church does not say so. On the contrary, we may hope that the majority will be saved, remembering the millions on millions of little ones, Jew and Gentile, who die before committing actual sin, and remembering that the Judge said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' As for the peoples and tribes who have lived and died without hearing the Gospel, it is written, 'God will render to every man according to his deeds' (Rom. ii. 6). Then we may hope that every heathen man who has obeyed the law of God written in his heart (Rom. ii. 14-16, 27), will find grace in the day of judgment; such a man, if

‘accepted,’ will be so, even as we are, only *in Christ*, by virtue of His atonement. In Acts xi. 34, 35, we find Peter declaring to Cornelius that ‘in every nation he that feareth (God) and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.’ They who overcome the world by faith in Christ are to be ‘kings and priests unto God’ (Rev. i. 5, 6). But under kings are subjects, and around priests are worshippers. The old temple had priests, and below these, Levites, and under them Nethinim (see Numb. xxxi. 47 and Ezra viii. 20); who can say that the living temple will not, in like manner, have lower orders of spared ones ‘*given*’ unto the High Priest, saved from wrath through Him, and consecrated to holy service in the kingdom of life and love?

6th. *That everlasting punishment condemns all, young and old, sinners in little and sinners in much, to one common condemnation.*

The Scriptures do not say so. Our Church does not say so. On the contrary, the Judge Himself spoke of ‘many stripes’ for some, and ‘few stripes’ for others. How many and how few, how heavy or how light, He said not, and herein His silence

teaches us both reverence and hope. Again, it is written, 'Without faith it is impossible to please Him' (Heb. xi. 6), but how little faith He will accept only He knoweth. This we do know—'A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench' (Isa. xlii. 3). 'Lord, increase *our* faith.'

7th. *That everlasting punishment is inconsistent with the extent and efficacy of 'Christ's infinite atonement,' and with His mission as declared by Himself in John iii. 17, 'God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.'*

By the context (John iii. 18, 19) we see that nevertheless there is condemnation for those who reject or neglect the Son: 'He that believeth not is condemned already.' The atonement is infinite in its extent and effect unto every one who with repentance and faith comes to Him who made the atonement. There is not a word to show that the atonement is effectual, here, or hereafter, for taking away the sins of those who pass it by in this life.

8th. *That everlasting punishment represents evil as at last triumphing over good.*

The condemned will go away into 'shame and everlasting contempt,' that is no triumph. By the condemnation of evil-doers, evil will be shown to be folly and failure. If the ungodly were to have success, pleasure, and all *they* value in this life (and that they often so have, is described in Job xxi. 7—15, Jer. xii. 1, 2, and Ps. lxxiii. 3—12), and to have no punishment in the world to come, then evil would seem to triumph over good. Evil cannot triumph, unless it succeed in escaping the judgment of God, or in doing something to overthrow His counsel and decree (Isa. iii. 10, 11). But part of His counsel and decree is this, that the wicked shall be cast into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Evil would triumph over good if one sinner could enter into the holy place without 'the righteousness of God which is by faith.' This objection depends for any strength it may seem to have on the taking for granted that it is to be believed the vast majority of mankind will perish everlastingly, but this we have already seen (under fifth objection) to be an unwarranted assumption.

9th. *That everlasting punishment represents God as establishing by 'an arbitrary infliction' 'a doom to everlasting sin.'*

There is a concealed reflection on God's righteousness in the word 'arbitrary;' as if He would act like fickle-humoured man, without just and good reason. True, 'He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will' (Eph. i. 11), but His will is the expression of all His perfect attributes in harmonious action, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. Sin is man's choice, not God's; as long as man chooses sin, so long must God punish it; we see men in this life resolutely continuing in sin, in spite of all God's warnings and invitations, mercies and chastisements; if here they *will* not 'cease to do evil and learn to do well,' it would seem that hereafter they *cannot*. If the Ethiopian skin or leopard spots of impenitence and iniquity be carried into eternity, then—men, not God—make evil perpetual, then 'everlasting sin' will be an awful reality—of which, not the Holy Creator, but the rebellious creature, is the author and the victim.

10th. *That they who preach everlasting punish-*



*ment put fear in the place of love as the constraining motive, seeming to 'think that men will not love God without the terror of an endless hell.'*

When we warn sinners to flee for life, we do use fear as one motive, so did the perfect Preacher in Luke xii. 5: 'Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him;' but we do not put fear in the place of love, we bid men fear and fly for refuge to Him who is love and is to be loved; we do exhort men to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear (1 Pet. i. 17); but following another apostle we also exhort them to abide in the perfect love which casteth out fear (1 John iv. 18).

11th. *That they who preach everlasting punishment (or some of them) take evil pleasure in the thought of eternal misery awaiting their fellow-creatures; that to these men the 'dogma is so dear, and precious, and comforting, that they are quite distressed at the thought of losing it.'*

Even if such preachers were more hard-hearted than this description makes them out to be, the reality and righteousness of God's sentence would

not be thereby affected. There are some persons who take pleasure in seeing the punishment of offenders in this world; that has nothing to do with the justice of such punishment. The preacher's heart and mind ought to be in accord with the Judge; if the Judge wept over the guilty, so ought the preacher, like Paul, to preach 'even weeping' concerning 'the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction' (Phil. iii. 18, 19); if the Judge say, 'Depart from me, ye cursed,' the preacher will be right in saying as the angels and people whom John heard—'Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because Thou hast judged thus' (Rev. xvi. 5, 7, xix. 1, 2).

12th. *That the belief of everlasting punishment suits the worst feelings of our corrupt nature, and is to a great degree answerable for hatred, and fierce quarrels, and cruelties.*

This objection is like the one next before it, and may be answered in like manner. If some persons indulge uncharitable feelings in the thought of everlasting punishment, their doing so does not affect the truth or righteousness of the doctrine,

any more than such improper feelings in contemplating temporal punishment of evil-doers affects the reality and propriety of such punishments. Criminals are not to escape the penalties due to their deeds because some people may take a bad pleasure in seeing them suffer the stripes they have deserved. A belief of *limited* future punishment may just as much suit the worst feelings of our corrupt nature, and be charged with fostering hatred.

13th. *That if men were to bring before their minds everlasting punishment, with a full belief of what it really means, they would be driven to madness.*

Perhaps it would be so in some cases, and also many would become mad if they could see or fully present to their minds all the pains and griefs which are ever in *this* world; but the facts remain, and God permits them, whatever we do or do not think and feel concerning them. We are not required, neither indeed are we able, to take in the bodily, mental, and spiritual anguish of this world, nor of the next; no eye but His to whom 'all things are naked and open' can scan the awful whole; no mind but His who 'fainteth not, neither

is weary,' can sustain the tremendous knowledge. To us He says, 'Repent, and believe the Gospel;' by grace we obey that command; then He says to us, 'Rejoice in the Lord alway.'

The worst kind of madness is that in which God's warnings and promises are heard, but not heeded; as when the warning to flee out of Sodom was treated by the sons-in-law of Lot as the empty threat of one that mocked.

14th. *That the saved could not enjoy their salvation if they were to see or know the misery of the lost in everlasting punishment.*

This, if it were to prove anything, would prove too much; for another objector might go farther, and urge that the saved could not enjoy their salvation if they were to see or know the misery of those who are condemned to a *limited* future punishment, and that therefore there must be no future punishment at all, lest the happiness of the saved be disturbed by any sight or knowledge of others—evil men, or evil angels, or Satan—suffering for sin. They who by grace attain to the blessedness of being for ever with the Lord will be then perfectly what they are

now in part—like-minded with God. Then sin will be seen in all its naked hideousness, and will be loathed with a holy hatred. When God shall banish the cursed from His presence, no saint will differ, even in heart, from Him who sitteth on the throne of judgment. Let those who make such an objection as the one we are now considering beware lest they sin as those did, who, when Korah and his company ‘went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them,’ ‘murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord’ (as if God’s judgment were only the device of His ministers!) for which murmuring God’s deadly wrath went forth against those who dared to dispute His righteous punishment (Numb. xvi. 33, 41, 46). Let us learn from another scripture a wiser and a more becoming mind: When two sons of Aaron provoked the LORD, ‘there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them.’ ‘And Aaron held his peace.’ ‘And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar, and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people’ (Lev. x. 1—6).

15th. *That the preaching of everlasting punishment tends to 'drive some into indignant atheism, and crush others under a deep despair.'*

Whatever may be the effects of our delivering God's message, deliver it we must ; it is our wisdom as well as our duty to keep close to the words which our Teacher and Master has chosen ; He thought fit to speak of 'Gehenna,' 'everlasting fire,' 'outer darkness,' 'wailing and gnashing of teeth ;' then we, His messengers, must speak of them. Will men profess to be servants of Christ, yet take upon themselves to amend His doctrines and to alter His words ? are they wiser or more merciful than their Master ? do they think His preaching needs apology or excuse ? Better were it for them and for others if they would say to the people, as did Jeremiah, 'Hear ye, and give ear ; be not proud : for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, He turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride' (Jer. xiii. 15—17). Let those preachers

who carefully avoid mentioning what our Saviour and Judge has declared concerning future punishment, beware lest they fall under His sentence, 'Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels' (Mark viii. 38). St. Paul knew that his preaching was to some 'the savour of death unto death . . . in them that perish' (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16), yet he did not shun to declare all the counsel of God. The preaching of *any* future punishment in the unquenchable fire may be so offensive to the rebellious minds of carnal men as to 'drive some into indignant atheism;' must we then forsooth say *nothing* of what our Lord has uttered concerning that fire and punishment, lest we provoke the 'ungodly to greater enmity against a holy God who is not such an one as they choose? God grant that we may hear and obey His command to Jonah, 'Preach the preaching that I bid thee' (iii. 2), and His command to Ezekiel, 'Thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear; for they are most rebellious' (ii. 7).

16th. *That the doctrine of everlasting punishment is a great drawback to the success of Christianity and of the Church ; and that both would gain much by its being quietly dropped out of our theology.*

In the first days of the Church, the one thing most offensive, and which most hindered the acceptance of the Gospel, was ‘the preaching of the cross ; Paul knew it was to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness ; to him it might have been said, Be prudent, temper your zeal with due regard to expediency and popular opinions ; do not disgust the cultivated Greeks, nor irritate the religious Jews, by speaking of the cross, at the best a most painful subject ; let it drop out of your theology, which is rich enough without that article, and then you will find your success will be rapid : Sadducee and Pharisee, Greek, Roman, and Barbarian will accept the morality and humanity of the Gospel, with all its tender charities and bright hopes. How would he have answered, think you ? Hear him—‘Do I now persuade men or God ? or do I seek to please men ? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ’ (Gal. i. 10).



17th. *That everlasting punishment has been denied by many learned and good men, therefore we cannot greatly err if we reject this doctrine.*

Many a false doctrine has been taught, many a true one denied, by religious and learned men. As to such, let us say, as a much wiser and holier one said, 'Of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me : God accepteth no man's person' (Gal. ii. 6). One is our teacher, one is our Lord. I hear a voice from heaven, saying, 'Thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me' (Ezek. xxxiii. 7).

18th. *That everlasting punishment is impossible, because no substance can be for ever in a state of being consumed, yet not be consumed; and the fire which would burn the condemned would also burn the 'worm.'*

Our Lord knew what He spoke of. While we know not the extent of God's power, and the secrets of His working in things which are seen and temporal, we are fools indeed if we presume to limit His operation in things unseen and eternal. The sentence on the condemned will proceed from

God's justice, the execution of the sentence will be ensured by His omniscience, and enforced by His omnipotence.

19th. *That everlasting punishment is contrary to human reason and conscience; therefore we cannot be required to believe it, as to do so would be to belie ourselves, and it never can be morally right to do violence to conscience.*

This, like some other objections already noticed, would prove too much; it would justify the Jews in rejecting Christ the Lord, and the conduct of Paul when he *verily thought* he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus (Acts xxvi. 9). Reason and conscience are both disordered by the fall, and must be brought into conformity with the mind of God, by His Word and His Holy Spirit.

20th. *That no matter how plainly texts may declare everlasting punishment, it is too horrible to be received.*

This is as much as to say, Even if everlasting punishment is written in the Bible, yet we refuse to be convinced. The Holy Scriptures may say

*Yea*, but we will say *Nay*. To men who practically speak thus, nothing brings persuasion; as is written of some, 'This they *willingly* are ignorant of' (2 Pet. iii. 5). May the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to convict, to convert, and to lead into the truth, incline them to ponder aright this question, 'Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God

### LECTURE III.

#### ANNIHILATION AND CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

‘The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.’—JOHN v. 28, 29.

THOSE who oppose the doctrine of everlasting punishment agree only in what they do not believe ; as soon as they are called on to say what they do believe, they divide into two chief parties, contradicting and destroying the arguments each of the other : the one says, Those who are not saved will be annihilated ; the other says, All the condemned will at length be restored and saved.

In the present lecture we shall consider the arguments of those who teach annihilation, or, as they sometimes prefer to express themselves, destruction, or extinction ; meaning, whatever word be used, that the lost, after suffering for as long

or short a time as God may think fit, will utterly and for ever cease to have any existence. The progress of this opinion is checked by one of the most wide-spread and deep-rooted of all beliefs, namely, that every man is a being whose existence will continue for ever without end. To tear up and get rid of this belief, sundry arguments are used.

1st. *That 'immortality is an infinite attribute of the Deity, and cannot be held or sustained by a creature.' For St. Paul declares that 'God only hath immortality' (1 Tim. vi. 16); and if God only has it, how can it be innate in any other?*

But this text only proves that God alone hath immortality of Himself, in Himself, not derived from another, and if pressed in the way the argument is worded, would go to prove that neither angels nor saints can be immortal. The words are much like those of our Lord when He said, 'As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself' (John v. 26). God gives life to His creatures, so also He can give immortality to angels, and endless existence to men made in His own image, as all men, the

evil and the good, are. Neither angels nor men have, nor can have, endless existence, nor any existence, of themselves, that is, apart from the will and the grant of God. It is as true of angels as of men, 'In Him we live and move and have our being' (Acts xvii. 28). This argument of the Annihilationists does not touch the point, which is, whether it is or is not to be gathered from God's Word that it is His will, as it certainly is in His power, to make all men possessors of endless existence, commonly called immortality.

2nd. *That the Old Testament does not contain any statement of the soul's immortality; that is to say, of the soul's natural, necessary, essential, intrinsic, inherent, or innate immortality.*

Nor does the Old Testament contain anything to prove that the angels have such immortality. It is a mistake to look for any such statement of the soul's immortality; it is another mistake to argue from there being none such, that therefore men may be annihilated. Man's continued existence after death is implied rather than affirmed. See, for example, Job xix. 25—27, Ps. xvi., and Dan. xii.

The bringing up of Samuel (1 Sam. xxviii.) is also a case in point. As life and incorruptibility were brought to light by Christ through the gospel (2 Tim. i. 10), to look for *clear* declarations concerning them in the Old Testament is like seeking the ripe fruits of summer among the beds and blossoms of spring.

We are challenged in vaunting language, with the mocking offer of a great reward, to 'produce a single text from the Word of God, which will prove the innate immortality of the soul;' all this is beside the mark, is indeed a twofold mistake, first in supposing that any reasonable man would think the creature could possess innate or natural immortality *of itself*, and again in trying to fasten down the debate to '*immortality of the soul*,' as if that expression were quite definite and simple, whereas it is very loose, shifting, and misleading, and as if it were of the same force or signification as *endless existence*, which it is not. In fact, the word 'immortality' has at least two meanings, one including, the other not including, reference to the body; the word 'soul' has likewise two meanings, being used to signify that life, or something more

than body, which is possessed by both man and beast, and also to denote the 'spirit,' which the lower creatures have not, but which man has; they are soul and body, man is spirit, soul, and body, as he is described in 1 Thess. v. 23: 'Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In 1 Cor. xv. 45, the distinction between soul and spirit is sharply marked: 'The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.'

3rd. *That the Jews believed the wicked will be annihilated, as is shown by the following:—*

2 Esdras ix. 15, 22, 33, 36: 'There be many more of them which perish, than of them which shall be saved.' 'Let the multitude perish then, which was born in vain.' 'We that have received the law perish by sin.'

viii. 43, 44: 'Like as the husbandman's seed perisheth, if it come not up, and receive not Thy rain in due season; or if there come too much rain, and corrupt it: even so perisheth man also.'

Wisdom of Solomon ii. 23, 24: 'For God created



man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity. Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world; and they that do hold of his side do find it.'

viii. 13, 17: 'By the means of her [Wisdom] I shall obtain immortality,' 'to be allied unto wisdom is immortality.'

xv. 3: 'To know Thy power is the root of immortality.'

But it is plain enough that 'perish' and 'immortality' are used in these passages of the Apocrypha only as they are used in the Scriptures, without any evidence that 'perish' was used to mean be annihilated, or that 'immortality' was used so as to mean that none will exist for ever except the righteous. *We* say the wicked 'perish,' that is, suffer ruin. *We* say 'immortality,' in the sense of 'everlasting life,' is for the righteous. Moreover we find these words in the same book, viz. :—

2 Esdras viii. 59, 60, 61: 'Thirst and pain are prepared for them: for it was not His will that men should come to nought: but they which be created have defiled the name of Him that made

them, and were unthankful unto Him which prepared life for them. And therefore is my judgment now at hand.'

ix. 9—13: 'Then shall they be in pitiful case which now have abused my ways: and they that have cast them away despitefully shall dwell in torments. For such as in their life have received benefits, and have not known me; and they that have loathed my law, while they had yet liberty, and when as yet place of repentance was open unto them, understood not, but despised it; the same must know it after death by pain. And therefore be thou not curious how the ungodly shall be punished, and when.'

Passages can be found in other books by Jewish authors of much later date, which favour the opinion of annihilation of the wicked; but what has been so written in the middle ages and in modern times by rabbis and commentators is of comparatively very small value. There is an ancient and curious book called 'The Ascension of Isaiah the Prophet,' which is most probably the work of a converted Jew, written about A.D. 69. One passage in it (iv. 18) seems to teach annihilation of the wicked; the words are—

‘There shall also be a resurrection and judgment in those days, while the Beloved shall cause to ascend from him a fire, to consume all the ungodly, who shall be as if they had never been created.’

But that annihilation is not meant is evident by comparing that passage with this from the same book :—

Chap. i. 3: ‘Truths relating to the eternal judgments, and to the torments of Gehenna, that place of everlasting punishment.’

We have already had before us, in the first lecture, the evidence of the 4th and 5th Books of Maccabees, proving the belief of the Jews in the first century that for the wicked there will be ‘eternal torment,’ also the passage from the ancient Book of Enoch (written, it is thought, in the time of Herod), affirming of the wicked, ‘Their souls shall not be annihilated in the day of judgment;’ also the testimony of the Jew Josephus (who lived in the days of the Apostles), that the Pharisees ‘believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison.’ Hippolytus,

a Christian bishop in the third century, confirms the statement of Josephus ; his words are—

Refutation of all Heresies, Book ix., chaps. 22, 23, 24 : ‘ Now the doctrine of the resurrection has also derived support among [the Essenes] ; for they acknowledge both that the flesh will rise again, and that it will be immortal, in the same manner as the soul is already imperishable. Now they affirm that there will be both a judgment and a conflagration of the universe, and that the wicked will be eternally punished. . . . There are also others who are called Pharisees—these likewise acknowledge that there is a resurrection of flesh, and that soul is immortal, and that there will be a judgment and conflagration, and that the righteous will be imperishable, but that the wicked will endure everlasting punishment in unquenchable fire. . . . The Sadducees, however, deny that there is a resurrection, not only of flesh, but also they suppose that the soul does not continue. . . . But that after death one expects to suffer nothing, either bad or good ; for that there will be a dissolution both of soul and body, and that man passes into non-existence, similarly also with the animal creation.’

Tacitus, the Roman historian, who was born in the middle of the first century (A.D. 58), writing of the Jews, says, 'They think the souls of those who are killed in battle or by punishments are eternal; hence contempt of dying' (Hist., Book v., s. 5).

We have the witness of St. Paul to prove that the Jews did not believe the wicked cease to exist after death; for he says—

Acts xxiv. 15: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

It appears then that the only ancient Jews whom the Annihilationists can truly claim as more or less agreeing with them are the Sadducees, who 'say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit' (Acts xxiii. 8). One would think it no help nor credit to have such allies.

4th. *That the New Testament declares immortality to be a gift of God, bestowed only on those who are born again by the Spirit, 'the Lord and Giver of life'; that this is shown in such texts as Rom. ii. 7: 'To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal*

*life.* Eph. ii. 5: '*When we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.*' John iii. 3—5: '*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*' 2 Cor. v. 17: '*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.*'

The New Testament does not say that 'immortality' is given only to those who are born again, it does say that 'eternal life' is given to them, and only to them, but 'eternal life' is not the same thing as 'immortality'; 'eternal life' they have now in this world, we know from *e.g.* John v. 24, 'hath everlasting life,' and 1 John v. 13, 'ye have eternal life,' but 'immortality' they cannot have until this mortal body shall be changed, this corruptible put on incorruption. (See 1 Cor. xv. 54, and Luke xx. 36.) The life-giving referred to in Eph. ii. 5, John iii. 3, 2 Cor. v. 17, is the quickening of man's spirit, by the Holy Spirit, to newness of spiritual life, which is distinct from mere existence: the ungodly are spiritually dead, although continuing in this life; when regenerated, quickened by the Spirit, they become alive unto God, and so, hereafter, the lost will remain spiritually dead, though continuing to exist.

5th. *That the belief of the immortality of the soul is to be traced to Plato, who lived in the fourth century before Christ, and is, in fact, a heathen opinion borrowed from him, and added on to the Christian faith.*

That Plato taught such a doctrine is an interesting fact, but he was not its author: we have already seen, in the first lecture, that ages before his birth the Egyptians and Chaldæans believed the continuance of existence after death, and the future punishment of the wicked. The Egyptians appear to have held that the wicked will be annihilated, after terrible sufferings. Early Christian writers owned in Plato's writings points of approach to the truths revealed in Holy Scripture; but they had no need of him to teach them man's continued existence after death; they had the Old and New Testaments, and in these they found, as we do, everlasting life and everlasting punishment. To say that the Christian belief of endless existence both of the just and of the unjust is due to Plato, is as unreasonable as to say that it is owing to Pope Leo X. and Pope Clement V.'s canon that 'the soul is immortal.'

Annihilation of the wicked was taught by Arnobius, a teacher of rhetoric, in Africa, who was converted from heathenism about the end of the third century. In his work, 'Adversus Gentes,' he says—

Book ii. 14 : 'Do you dare to laugh at us when we speak of hell, and fires which cannot be quenched, into which we have learned that souls are cast by their foes and enemies? . . . For that which is seen by the eyes is a separation of soul from body, not the last end—annihilation ; this, I say, is man's real death, when souls which know not God shall be consumed in long-protracted torment with raging fire.'

Book ii. 16 : 'But if that, too, which is said in the more hidden mysteries is true, that the souls of wicked men, on leaving their human bodies, pass into cattle and other creatures, it is [even] more clearly shown that we are allied to them.'

Tatian, an Assyrian, who fell from the Christian faith into Gnostic heresy, and died in the latter half of the second century, says, in his 'Address to the Greeks':—

Chap. xiii. : 'The soul is not in itself immortal



O Greeks, but mortal, yet it is possible for it not to die. If, indeed, it knows not the truth, it dies, and is dissolved with the body, but rises again at last, at the end of the world, with the body, receiving death by punishment in immortality.'

Theophilus, bishop of Antioch late in the second century, seems to favour those who deny 'immortality of the soul.' He says in his work addressed 'To Autolycus':—

Book ii., chap. 27: 'Was man made by nature mortal? Certainly not. Was he then immortal? Neither do we affirm this. . . . He was by nature neither mortal nor immortal.'

But this is not spoken of man's spirit. The freedom from bodily death is the point in the argument of Theophilus, and elsewhere (ii. 19), quoting Gen. ii. 6, he says—

'Whence also by most persons the soul is called immortal.'

And in Book i. 14, he says—

'Lest if now you continue unbelieving, you be convinced hereafter, where you are tormented with eternal punishments; which punishments, when they had been foretold by the prophets, the later-

born poets and philosophers stole from the Holy Scriptures, to make their doctrines worthy of credit.'

Athenagoras, a Greek philosopher, converted to Christianity in the second century, speaks well in his treatise on the resurrection, showing the true ground for believing the endless existence of all men.

Chaps. xii. and xiii.: 'To those who bear upon them the image of the Creator Himself, and are endowed with understanding, and blessed with a rational judgment, the Creator has assigned perpetual duration. . . . Our belief rests on a most infallible guarantee—the purpose of Him who fashioned us, according to which He made man of an immortal soul and a body.'

Chap. xv.: 'The conclusion is unavoidable, that, along with the interminable duration of the soul, there will be a perpetual continuance of the body according to its proper nature.'

Justin Martyr, in the second century, and other ancient Christian writers, believed that Plato, while in Egypt, learned, directly or indirectly, from the Hebrew Scriptures, the doctrines of resurrection and the judgment of the soul with the body.

6th. *That when it is said in the Scriptures the wicked shall 'die,' 'perish,' 'be destroyed,' 'not see life,'—these words must be taken in their natural sense as in all other cases, that therefore it is to be understood the wicked shall utterly cease to have any existence, it being unreasonable to believe that 'perish' means be kept alive, and 'death' an immortality of misery. That the same is to be learned from such scriptural expressions as chaff-burning, chaff driven away by the wind, smoke vanishing away, thorns burning, tares burning, fat of lambs consumed by fire, be like an untimely birth, be like lamps put out, be like beasts that perish; and that the same is to be gathered from such texts as the following:—*

Gen. iii. 22 : 'Lest he take of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.'

Gen. vi. 7 : 'I will destroy man, whom I have created.'

Numb. xv. 30, 31 : 'That soul shall utterly be cut off.'

Ps. xxxvii. 10, 20 : 'The wicked shall not be,' 'the wicked shall perish.'

Ps. xxxvii. 38 : 'The end of the wicked shall be cut off.'

Ps. xcii. 7 : 'The wicked . . . shall be destroyed for ever.'

Prov. xv. 11 : 'Hell and destruction are before the Lord.'

Isa. xxvi. 14 : 'They shall not live, shall not rise.'

Isa. xliii. 17 : 'They are extinct, they are quenched as tow.'

Obad. 16 : 'They shall be as though they had not been.'

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Matt. x. 28 : 'Able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'

Matt. xxi. 41 : 'Will miserably destroy those wicked men.'

Matt. xxi. 44 : 'This stone . . . will grind him to powder.'

Luke xiii. 3 : 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'

John iii. 15 : 'Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

Acts iii. 23 : 'Every soul which will not hear shall be destroyed.'

Rom. vi. 21, 23 : 'The end of those things . . . wages of sin . . . is death.'

2 Cor. iv. 3 : 'Gospel . . . hid to them that are lost.'

2 Thess. i. 9 : 'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.' That 'they cannot be where God or the Lord is not ; and if they are out of His presence, then they are nowhere ; that is, they are no longer alive anywhere.' But answer this curious argument by Gen. iv. 16 : 'Cain went out from the presence of the Lord ;' and Job. i. 12 : 'Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.' Cain and Satan did not cease to exist when they were out of God's presence, but by this argument they would have been then extinct !

Heb. x. 27 : 'Fiery indignation, which will devour the adversaries.'

Heb. xii. 29 : 'Our God is a consuming fire.'

2 Pet. ii. 12 : 'Shall utterly perish in their own corruption.'

2 Pet. iii. 7 : 'Day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.'

Many of the texts here brought forward to support the opinion that the wicked will be put out of existence are taken from the Old Testament, and are limited in their application by the fact that before the Gospel, things temporal were those chiefly referred to by the Word of God. It is also a mere assertion without proof to say that 'perish,' 'be cut off,' 'be destroyed,' must mean, become extinct as regards existence. Separation from the living God,—this is spiritual destruction, perishing, death. A thing may in one sense perish, yet in another sense exist, as we see by 2 Pet. iii. 6, 'The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished;' nevertheless, though the old order ceased, the world remains in existence. It sounds well to say the words should be taken in their natural sense; but there may be more than one natural sense, and we must take care, if this is so, that we take the proper sense, the right one in any particular passage. For example, 'death' is used in at least three senses, first, death of the body, second, death in sin (Eph. ii. 5), and third, death to sin (Rom. vi. 2, 11). Death *in* sin consists with bodily life, and death *to* sin consists with spiritual life.

Let us now look at some other texts which forbid the belief of Extinction, Destruction, or Annihilation :—

1 Sam. xxvii. : 'The bringing up of Samuel.

Job xix. 26 : '(Though) after my skin worms destroy this (body), yet in my flesh shall I see God.'

Isa. xxvi. 19 : 'Thy dead shall live, (together with) my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, and the earth shall cast out the dead.'

Dan. xii. 2 : 'Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'

Hos. xiii. 9 : 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help.' [Here is shown spiritual destruction, but continued existence.]

Mark ix. 43—48 : 'Having two hands . . . two eyes, to be cast into the fire that never shall be quenched.'

Luke xvi. 23, 24 : 'In hell [Hades] he lift up his eyes, being in torments . . . I am tormented in this flame.'

Luke xx. 38 : 'He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him.'

Acts xxiv. 15 : 'There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.'

1 Cor. xv. 52 : 'The dead shall be raised incorruptible.'

Heb. x. 28, 29 : 'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, . . . of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall

he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God?’

Rev. xi. 18: ‘That thou . . . shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.’

Rev. xiv. 11: ‘The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image.’

Rev. xx. 10: ‘The devil . . . was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet (are), and (they) shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.’

Rev. xx. 15: ‘Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.’

Rev. xxi. 8: ‘The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.’

Texts must not be sacrificed to texts, all must be accepted; God cannot contradict Himself.

It is necessary to observe carefully the Greek words in the New Testament rendered in English immortality, immortal, endless.

*Athanasia* (literally deathlessness) occurs three times, viz. :—

1 Cor. xv. 53: ‘This mortal (must) put on *immortality*.’

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1 Cor. xv. 54: 'This mortal shall have put on *immortality*.'

1 Tim. vi. 16: 'Who only hath *immortality*.'

*Aphtharsia* (incorruption) occurs eight times,  
viz. :—

Rom. ii. 7: 'To them who . . . seek for glory, and honour,  
and *immortality*.'

1 Cor. xv. 42: 'It is raised in *incorruption*.'

1 Cor. xv. 50: 'Neither doth corruption inherit *incorruption*.'

1 Cor. xv. 53: 'This corruptible must put on *incorruption*.'

1 Cor. xv. 54: 'When this corruptible shall have put on  
*incorruption*.'

Eph. vi. 24: 'That love our Lord Jesus Christ in *sincerity*.'

2 Tim. i. 10: 'Hath brought life and *immortality* to light.'

Tit. ii. 17: 'In doctrine (showing) . . . *sincerity*.'

*Aphthartos* (incorruptible) occurs seven times,  
viz. :—

Rom. i. 23: 'The glory of the *incorruptible* God.'

1 Cor. ix. 25: 'But we an *incorruptible* (crown).'

1 Cor. xv. 52: 'The dead shall be raised *incorruptible*.'

1 Tim. i. 17: 'The king eternal, *immortal*.'

1 Pet. i. 4: 'To an inheritance *incorruptible*.'

1 Pet. i. 23: 'Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of  
*incorruptible*.'



1 Pet. iii. 4: 'That which is *not corruptible* . . . of a meek and quiet spirit.'

*Akatalutos* (indissoluble) occurs once, viz. :—

Heb. vii. 16: 'Another priest . . . after the power of an *endless* life.'

*Aperantos* (endless or countless) occurs once, viz. :—

1 Tim. i. 4: 'Fables and *endless* genealogies.'

Those who contend that the ungodly will be put out of existence, do not discern between body, soul, and spirit, between immortality, endless existence, and eternal life ; hence many serious errors arise, and a confusion of thought which 'darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge.'

We have already noticed the remarkable words of 1 Thess. v. 23, ' . . . your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It may be of service to consider them more attentively ; the subject may be made clearer by the help of the following plan or table, giving separate places to spirit, soul, and body ; showing at once the distinctness of each, the union and the reunion of all.

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SPRIT (PNEUMA).	SOUL (PSUCHE).	BODY (SOMA).
<i>Before sin.</i> <i>Living</i> —naturally, i.e. not of itself, but so constituted by God as to exist for ever. <i>Alive</i> spiritually.	<i>Before sin.</i> United with the spirit and with the body.	<i>Before sin.</i> Capable of immortality.
<i>By sin.</i> <i>Living</i> —naturally. <i>Dead</i> —spiritually. Ecd. xii. 7.	<i>By sin.</i> Suffers dissolution from the body, and with the spirit returns to God for His disposal.	<i>By sin.</i> Suffers dissolution from the spirit and the soul, returns to dust.
<i>In Resurrection of the just.</i> <i>Living</i> —naturally. <i>Alive</i> spiritually.	<i>In Resurrection of the just.</i> Re-united along with the living spirit to the immortal body.	<i>In Resurrection of the just.</i> Raised immortal, incorruptible, and reunited to the spirit and the soul.
to enjoy 'everlasting life.'		
<i>In Resurrection of the unjust.</i> <i>Living</i> —naturally. <i>Dead</i> —spiritually, reunited to the soul and the immortal body.	<i>In Resurrection of the unjust.</i> Reunited along with the dead spirit to the immortal body.	<i>In Resurrection of the unjust.</i> Raised immortal to be reunited to the dead spirit, and the soul.

to suffer 'everlasting punishment' in 'the second death.'

7th. *That the punishment of the wicked will be such as to be rightly called 'everlasting,' because, though they will be put out of existence, the effect of the judgment executed on them will be everlasting.*

But extinction of being would be deliverance from punishment, and is altogether inconsistent with the declarations of Holy Scripture, that the punishment of the condemned will be ‘everlasting,’ ‘for ever and ever.’

8th. ‘Conditional Immortality.’ *That life can only be in Christ ‘who is our life’; that immortality was forfeited by the Fall, and is only restored to as many as are savingly united to Christ; that this is shown by such texts as John xvii. 3, ‘This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent;’ Rom. vi. 23, ‘The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord;’ and 1 John v. 11, 12, ‘God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.’*

If this argument were sound, it would follow that the ungodly who have never been ‘in Christ’ must when they give up their breath cease to exist, but, as our text and Acts xxiv. 15 declare, they will rise again, therefore they do not pass out of existence when their mortal bodies return to dust; and as

they continue to exist beyond the grave, there is an existence which is continued spiritual death. We cannot think they will be put out of existence at the death of the body, and brought into existence again at the resurrection ; for whatsoever is utterly put out of existence, or annihilated, cannot be brought back, there is not anything left to be restored. Neither can we think that the wicked, kept in existence for ages, waiting for the resurrection of condemnation, will be raised from the grave only to be put out of existence. If these sinners continue to exist for a thousand years, though not 'in Christ,' they may continue so to exist for ever. The immortality which was forfeited by the fall has special reference to the body, and, as we have now seen, is distinct from 'eternal life.' One who calls himself an Extinctionist feels our text to be so much opposed to his opinions, that he tries to show the lost heathen will have no resurrection !

Conditional Immortality seems to honour the Lord Jesus by teaching that life is only in Him, but it can never in reality honour Him to strain the words of Holy Scripture. Life spiritual is only in Him, but continued existence, which is consistent

with spiritual death, is beyond all doubt possessed by evil angels and evil men, who are not *in* 'Christ, who is our life.' It must also be remembered that He is described in Heb. i. 3, as 'upholding all things by the word of His power.' Annihilation (or extinction) of the wicked may seem to offer an escape from fearful thoughts of eternal punishment; but this must not be allowed to act as a bribe to induce us to wrest the words of Holy Writ; and this notion, in trying to avoid one difficulty or mystery, brings in other things as hard or harder to be understood; it also offers a soothing drug to lull the ungodly into desperate carelessness, many of whom would be glad to make sure, if they could, that with the last breath on earth they shall altogether and for ever cease to be. Suicide shows that annihilation is what many seek. Extinction of being is the professed belief of Materialists and Atheists; one cannot wonder at their holding such a creed, but it is passing strange to find Christians adopting their arguments, and joining with infidels to teach that a man's being will pass away like the beasts that perish!

We have now heard the arguments used to teach

what is called 'Conditional Immortality,' and some sort of annihilation; and we find them to be based on confusion, and built up with courses of error upon error. We read in Gen. i. 27, that God created man, male and female, in the image of God; that image was injured, but not destroyed, by the fall; for we read in Gen. ix. 6, God still owns the likeness, and grounds His law thereon, saying, 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man.' Now God is the *living* God; He liveth for ever and ever; it cannot be reasonably held that the children were not, as to this essential, in the likeness of their heavenly Father; therefore we believe that inasmuch as men are made in the similitude of God (James iii. 9), because He exists for ever, they all will exist for ever; moreover we believe as equally true that only they who are accepted in Christ have 'everlasting life,' that they who were spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, do, by faith in Him, pass from spiritual death unto spiritual life (John v. 24), and that to these His words are spoken, 'Because I live, ye shall live also' (John xiv. 19).

## LECTURE IV.

## UNIVERSALISM OR RESTORATION.

‘Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.’—MATT. xxv. 41.

LAST week we discussed the opinion known as Annihilation, Destruction, or Extinction of the Wicked. In the present lecture we shall occupy ourselves with a rival doctrine, which is called, in its most extreme form, Universalism, and when more or less limited, Restoration; the meaning being that lost souls will, sooner or later, be saved; that for all, or nearly all, there will be a ‘conversion of earth’s sinners, far off it may be—but *at last*—into God’s saints;’ and, as many holding such opinions would add, that ‘the devil and his angels’ will also be at last restored to the favour of God. We shall now consider the leading arguments of those who so teach.

1st. *That the belief of everlasting punishment is maintained by erroneous translations, particularly of the Greek words in the New Testament rendered in English 'damnation,' 'hell,' and 'everlasting.'*

There are three words translated, 'damnation,' viz., *krima*, *krisis*, and *apoleia*. We must look at some examples of each of these.

*Krima* occurs twenty-eight times :—

Matt. xxiii. 14 : 'Hypocrites . . . ye shall receive the greater *damnation*.'

Mark xii. 40 : 'Scribes . . . these shall receive greater *damnation*.'

Luke xx. 47 : Scribes . . . shall receive greater *damnation*.'

Luke xxiii. 40 : 'Thou [viz., thief on cross] art in the same *condemnation*.'

Luke xxiv. 20 : 'Delivered him to be *condemned* to death.'

Rom. iii. 8 : 'Evil that good may come? whose *damnation* is just.'

Rom. xiii. 2 : 'That resist [rulers] shall receive to themselves *damnation*.'

1 Cor. xi. 29 : 'Eateth and drinketh *damnation* to himself.'

1 Tim. iii. 6 : 'Fall into the *condemnation* of the devil.'

1 Tim. v. 12 : 'Having *damnation*, because cast off first faith.'

Heb. vi. 2 : 'Of resurrection and of eternal *judgment*.'



We see that this word, although in some cases used to mean minor and undefined judgments, is also applied to the extreme punishment of death, *e.g.*, in the cases of our Lord Jesus and the malefactors crucified with Him.

*Krisis* occurs forty-eight times :—

Matt. xxiii. 33 : 'How can ye escape the *damnation* of hell?'

Mark iii. 29 : 'Is in danger of eternal *damnation* [or sin].'

John v. 29 : 'Done evil unto the resurrection of *damnation*.'

John xvi. 11 : 'Of *judgment*, because the prince of this world is judged.'

Heb. x. 27 : 'Fearful looking for of *judgment*.'

2 Pet. ii. 4 : 'Angels that sinned . . . reserved unto *judgment*.'

2 Pet. ii. 9 : 'Reserve the unjust unto the day of *judgment*.'

Jude 6 : 'Angels reserved unto the *judgment* of the great day.'

Jude 15 : 'To execute *judgment* upon all.'

Rev. xviii. 10 : 'Babylon . . . in one hour is thy *judgment* come.'

The general meaning is judgment, but we see the utter destruction of Babylon by fire is called *krisis*,

and the same word is applied to the judgment of the ungodly as to that of the fallen angels.

Two other words are rendered condemnation, viz., *katakrima* and *katakrisis*.

*Katakrima* occurs three times :—

Rom. v. 16 : 'Judgment was made by one to *condemnation*.'

Rom. v. 18 : 'Upon all men to *condemnation*.'

Rom. viii. 1 : 'No *condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus.'

*Katakrisis* occurs twice, viz. :—

2 Cor. iii. 9 : 'If the ministration of *condemnation* be glory.'

2 Cor. vii. 3 : 'I speak not to *condemn* you.'

The words *krino* and *katakrino* are translated by the English word 'damn,' as well as by 'judge' and 'condemn.'

*Krino* occurs one hundred and thirteen times :—

John iii. 17 : 'Sent not His Son . . . to *condemn* the world.'

John iii. 18 : 'He that believeth not is *condemned* already.'

2 Thess. ii. 12 : 'That they all might be *damned* who believed not.'

Heb. xiii. 4 : 'Whoremongers and adulterers God will *judge*.'

*Katakrino* occurs nineteen times :—

Matt. xx. 18 : ' Shall *condemn* him to death.'

Mark xvi. 16 : ' He that believeth not shall be *damned*.'

Rom. xiv. 23 : ' He that doubteth is *damned* if he eat.'

1 Cor. xi. 32 : ' That we should not be *condemned* with the world.'

There is another word rendered 'condemn,' which occurs five times, it is—

*Katadikazo*.

Matt. xii. 7 : ' Ye would not have *condemned* the guiltless.'

Matt. xii. 37 : ' By thy words thou shalt be *condemned*.'

Luke vi. 37 : ' *Condemn* not, and ye shall not be *condemned*.'

James v. 6 : ' Ye have *condemned* and killed the just.'

And there are also two words translated judgment, it may be well to notice, they are—

*Dikaiōma*, which occurs ten times :—

Rom. i. 32 : ' Who knowing the *judgment* of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death.'

Rev. xv. 4 : ' Thy *judgments* are made manifest.'

*Dikaiokrisia*, which occurs once :—

Rom. ii. 5 : ' The day of wrath, and revelation of the *righteous judgment* of God.'

It is now made evident by the examination of

these words brought before you, that although 'judge,' 'condemn,' 'judgment,' 'condemnation,' cannot be taken as always meaning the *greatest* judgments or condemnations, so neither can they be always limited to the less, and that the cases in which they certainly denote the greatest possible are so many and so decided as to forbid the opinion that these terms may be weakened or softened when they refer to the judgments of the great day and 'the wrath to come.'

Two words are translated 'hell,'—*Hades* and *Gehenna*.

*Hades* occurs eleven times :—

Matt. xi. 23 : 'Thou Capernaum, exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to *hell*.'

Matt. xvi. 18 : 'The gates of *hell* shall not prevail against it.

Luke x. 15 : 'Thou Capernaum, exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to *hell*.'

Luke xvi. 23 : 'In *hell* he lift up his eyes, being in torments.'

Acts ii. 27 : 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*.'

Acts ii. 31 : 'Christ, His soul was not left in *hell*.'

1 Cor. xv. 55 : 'O *grave*, where is thy victory ?'

Rev. i. 18 : 'I . . . have the keys of *hell* and of death.'

Rev. vi. 8 : 'His name was Death, and *hell* followed with him.'

Rev. xx. 13 : 'Death and *hell* delivered up the dead which were in them.'

Rev. xx. 14 : 'Death and *hell* were cast into the lake of fire.'

*Gehenna* occurs twelve times :—

Matt. v. 22 : 'Shall be in danger of *hell* fire.'

Matt. v. 29 : 'Not thy whole body should be cast into *hell*.'

Matt. v. 30 : 'Not thy whole body should be cast into *hell*.'

Matt. x. 28 : 'Is able to destroy both soul and body in *hell*.'

Matt. xviii. 9 : 'Having two eyes, to be cast into *hell* fire.'

Matt. xxiii. 15 : 'Twofold more the child of *hell* than yourselves.'

Matt. xxiii. 33 : 'How can ye escape the damnation of *hell* ?'

Mark ix. 43 : 'To go into *hell*, fire that never shall be quenched.'

Mark ix. 45 : 'Cast into *hell*, fire that never shall be quenched.'

Mark ix. 47 : 'Having two eyes, to be cast into *hell* fire.'

Luke xii. 5 : 'After he hath killed hath power to cast into *hell*.'

James iii. 6 : 'The tongue . . . is set on fire of *hell*.'

*Tartaroō* is the only other word rendered *hell* ; it occurs only once :—

2 Pet. ii. 4 : 'God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast (them) down to *hell*.'

It seems to be imagined that a great deal is done toward taking away the dread signification of hell, when it is explained that Hades 'simply means the world beyond the grave,' and that Gehenna 'means primarily the Valley of Hinnom, outside Jerusalem, in which, after it had been polluted by Moloch-worship, corpses were flung and fires were lit ;' but such explanations avail nothing, they are but trifling, in presence of the fact that our Lord Himself tells us of one who 'in Hades lift up his eyes, being in torments,' 'tormented in this flame' (Luke xvi. 23, 24), and that He describes Gehenna as the place in which, after death, soul and body are destroyed;—'the fire that never shall be quenched.' One might as reasonably try to take away the belief of heaven by proving that 'heaven' simply, or primarily, means the firmament, or the open sky, as to endeavour to explain away hell by talk about Hades and the Vale of Hinnom.

We come now to the terms 'everlasting,' 'eternal,' 'for ever,' and the like. First, the Greek word which is of the same root as our word *ever*; in single

or in doubled form this word, *aion*, occurs about one hundred and thirteen times.

Matt. xxviii. 20 : 'I am with you alway, unto the end of the *world*.'

1 Tim. i. 17 : 'The king *eternal*, immortal, invisible.'

Heb. i. 2 : 'By whom also he made the *worlds*.'

*Eis ton aiona.*

Matt. xxi. 19 : 'No fruit grow on thee henceforward *for ever*.'

Mark iii. 29 : 'Hath *never* forgiveness.'

Luke i. 55 : 'Abraham and his seed *for ever*.'

John vi. 51, 58 : 'Eat of this bread . . . shall live *for ever*.'

John viii. 35 : 'The servant abideth not in the house *for ever* : (but) the son abideth *ever*.'

John viii. 51 : 'Keep my saying, he shall *never* see death.'

John x. 28 : 'They shall *never* perish.'

John xiv. 16 : 'Another Comforter . . . abide with you *for ever*.'

Heb. vii. 21 : 'Thou art a priest *for ever* after the order of Melchizedek.'

Heb. vii. 24 : 'Because He continueth *ever*, hath an unchangeable priesthood.'

Heb. vii. 28 : 'The Son, who is consecrated *for evermore*.'

1 Pet. i. 23 : 'The word of God, which liveth and abideth *for ever*.'

1 Pet. i. 25 : 'The word of the Lord endureth *for ever*.'

2 John 2 : 'The truth . . . shall be with us *for ever*.'

Jude 13 : 'The blackness of darkness *for ever*.'

*Eis ton aiōna tou aiōnou.*

Heb. i. 8 : 'Thy throne, O God, is *for ever and ever*.'

*Eis tous aiōnas.*

Luke i. 33 : 'He shall reign over the house of Jacob *for ever*, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.'

Rom. xi. 36 : 'To whom be glory *for ever*.'

2 Cor. xi. 31 : 'Which is blessed *for evermore*.'

Heb. xiii. 8 : 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and *for ever*.'

*Eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn.*

Gal. i. 5 : 'To whom be glory *for ever and ever*.'

1 Tim. i. 17 : 'To the King *eternal* (ton aiōnōn) be glory *for ever and ever*.'

Rev. i. 18 : 'Behold, I am alive *for evermore*.'

Rev. xi. 15 : 'And He shall reign *for ever and ever*.'

Rev. xiv. 11 : 'The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*.'

Rev. xv. 7 : 'The wrath of God, who liveth *for ever and ever*.'

Rev. xx. 10 : 'Shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*.'

Rev. xxii. 5 : 'They shall reign *for ever and ever*.'

These examples of *aiōn* must suffice : we go on.



to the adjective, *aionios*, which occurs seventy-one times, in forty-four of them with 'life.'

Matt. xviii. 8 : 'To be cast into *everlasting* fire.'

Matt. xxv. 41 : 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into *everlasting* fire.'

Matt. xxv. 46 : 'These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, but the righteous into life *eternal*.'

Mark iii. 29 : 'Hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of *eternal* damnation.'

Luke xvi. 9 : 'Receive you into *everlasting* habitations.'

Rom. xvi. 25 : 'Mystery kept secret since *the world began*.'

Rom. xvi. 26 : 'The commandment of the *everlasting* God.'

2 Cor. iv. 17 : 'Exceeding and *eternal* weight of glory.'

2 Cor. iv. 18 : 'Things seen temporal, things not seen *eternal*.'

2 Cor. v. 1 : 'House not made with hands, *eternal* in the heavens.'

2 Thess. i. 9 : 'Shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction.'

2 Thess. ii. 16 : 'Hath given us *everlasting* consolation.'

1 Tim. vi. 16 : 'To whom be honour and power *everlasting*.'

2 Tim. i. 9 : 'Given us in Christ Jesus before *the world began*.'

2 Tim. ii. 10 : 'Salvation which is in Christ Jesus with *eternal* glory.'

Titus i. 2 : 'Hope of *eternal* life, promised before *the world began*.'

Philem. 15 : 'Departed for a season, receive him *for ever*.'

Heb. v. 9 : 'He became the author of *eternal* salvation.'

Heb. vi. 2 : 'Resurrection of the dead, and of *eternal* judgment.'

Heb. ix. 12 : 'Having obtained *eternal* redemption.'

Heb. ix. 14 : 'Christ, through the *eternal* Spirit, offered Himself.'

Heb. ix. 15 : 'The promise of *eternal* inheritance.'

Heb. xiii. 20 : 'The blood of the *everlasting* covenant.'

1 Pet. v. 10 : 'Hath called us unto His *eternal* glory.'

2 Pet. i. 11 : 'The *everlasting* kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.'

Jude 7 : 'Suffering the vengeance of *eternal* fire.'

Rev. xiv. 6 : 'Another angel . . . having the *everlasting* gospel.'

It will not help the Universalist to bring passages from some classic authors to show that *aiōnios* was used in some cases with limited meaning—contrary passages can be summoned to outweigh these; neither will the argument, some think so strong, that *aiōnios* means for ever or not for ever, long or short duration, according as that of which it is spoken is everlasting or not, long or not long-enduring, and should be simply translated 'age-long,' because salvation and condemnation are both spoken of man,

and both by the same word *aïōnios*. It is proposed to read 'eternal' instead of 'everlasting,' but neither will this help them ; it is not a mere question of minute differences in words, everlasting or eternal, damnation or condemnation, in Hell or in Gehenna—it is the *thing*, the *fact*, which we have to ponder. It has been said and repeated that this word *aïōnios* is something above and beyond time, and that our Lord has deliberately excluded the notion of duration from this word ; we can only wonder at such language, and turn to the list of texts now given, when we see that *aïōnios* is used to mark the duration of 'salvation, redemption, the Spirit (of Christ), inheritance, covenant, glory, kingdom of Christ, Gospel, and God Himself.

Our English version of the Scriptures is blamed, and the translators are almost denounced for countenancing the belief of everlasting punishment, by allowing the words we have been examining to stand as they do in our Bibles ; but it may be sufficient to remember that the early Christian writers were not misled into the belief of everlasting punishment by erroneous translations, for Greek was to many of them their mother-tongue, and to others was

familiar; yet we have seen in the first of these lectures that the 'general belief in the early ages of the Church was, that the punishment of the ungodly will be in 'everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'

2nd. It is attempted to show that Restoration is taught in the Scriptures; to this end are cited many texts, which may be set down in four or five classes.

(A) Texts declaring God's mercy and forgiveness:—

Ps. ciii. 9: 'He will not always chide; neither keep (anger) for ever.'

Isa. lvii. 16: 'I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth.'

Hos. vi. 1: 'He hath torn, and He will heal us.'

Hos. xiv. 4: 'I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him.'

(B) Texts declaring the universality of the Saviour's mission:—

John iii. 16, 17: 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. . . . God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.'

Rom. xi. 32: 'Hath concluded all in unbelief,' that He might have mercy on all.'

1 Tim. ii. 4: 'Who will have all men to be saved.'

Tit. ii. 11, 12: 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.'

Heb. ii. 9: 'Jesus . . . by the grace of God should taste death for every man.'

Heb. ii. 14: 'That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.'

1 John ii. 2: 'Propitiation . . . for the sins of the whole world.'

1 John iv. 14: 'The Son . . . the Saviour of the world.'

(c) Texts declaring the efficacy of Christ's atonement :—

Luke ix. 56: 'Not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.'

John i. 29: 'Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.'

John xii. 32: 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.'

Rom. xiv. 9: 'Lord both of the dead and living.'

2 Cor. v. 19: 'Reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.'

1 Tim. ii. 6: 'Gave Himself a ransom for all.'

1 Tim. iv. 10: 'The Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.'

(D) Texts declaring the future triumph of righteousness :—

Gen. iii. 5 : 'Her seed . . . shall bruise thy head.'

Gen. xii. 3 : 'In thee (Abram) shall all families of the earth be blessed.'

Acts iii. 21 : 'The times of restitution of all things.'

1 Cor. xv. 22—24 : 'In Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.'

1 Cor. xv. 28 : 'That God may be all in all.'

Eph. i. 10 : 'Gather together in one all things in Christ.'

Phil. ii. 9—11 : 'At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess.'

Phil. iii. 21 : 'He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.'

Col. i. 19, 20 : 'Having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.'

Heb. ii. 6, 9 : 'All things put under Him, . . . taste death for every man.'

Rev. v. 13 : 'Every creature in heaven, earth, and under the earth' (praising God).

Rev. xxi. 4, 5 : 'No more death, sorrow, nor crying, nor pain; all things new.'

Rev. xxii. 3 : 'And there shall be no more curse.'

(E) Sundry texts, *e.g.* :—

2 Sam. xiv. 14 : 'Yet doth He devise means, that His banished be not expelled from Him.'

Ps. cxxxix. 8 : ' If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.'

Matt. v. 26 : ' By no means come out, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.'

1 Cor. iii. 15 : ' He himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.'

1 Pet. iii. 19 : ' Preached to the spirits in prison.'

1 Pet. iv. 6 : ' Gospel preached to them that are dead.'

It will not be expected, nor is it needful, that we should discuss all these texts; a careful examination of them and their contexts will show that, as regards almost all of them, when they are put forward by the Restorationist, he takes for granted two things which he has no right to do; first, that the gracious purposes of God, which we know to be sure for every one that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, are also sure for every one that feareth Him not, but doeth evil; second, that what we know to hold good for the living until the day of judgment, will hold good for the dead, and beyond the day of judgment: two assumptions as bad in logic as they are in theology.

3rd. *That much of the language in Holy Scripture which seems to declare that future punishment will be*

*intense and eternal must be treated as metaphorical, figurative, illustrative, and ought not to be taken literally; that 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,' must be remembered in dealing with such passages.*

Figures must refer to facts, and must correspond to them. The things signified may be immensely greater than the metaphors by which they are set before us; we believe this to be so of the heavenly blessings prepared for the saved—it is but reasonable to think it will be so as to the punishments of the cursed, and that which is 'prepared for the devil and his angels.' As to 2 Cor. iii. 6, when dreamers put forth some flighty conceits as to the hidden sense of Scripture, they are only too ready to plead in their own favour, and against the plain meaning of words, 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;' if they would come down from their airy fancies, and soberly look at these words and the context, along with Rom. vii. 6—10, and Rom. viii. 2, they might learn that 'the letter' refers to the law, and 'the spirit' to the Gospel.

*4th. That God may threaten everlasting punishment, but not execute the threat.*



This is to think God such as ourselves. His threatenings in some cases were suspended on repentance, *e.g.*, as concerned Nineveh; but passages like our text are not threatenings, they are absolute statements of facts to come; as much so as the foretelling of Jerusalem's doom.

5th. *That as 'God is love,' He must be willing, and as He is the Almighty, He must be able, to save the lost, and to restore the condemned; and that we can learn as much from Luke xv. 4, 'Go after that which is lost, until he find it;' 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4, 'God our Saviour, who willeth all men to be saved,' 'the Saviour of all men;' 2 Pet. iii. 9, 'Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'*

God is willing that all men be saved, but He does not use His almighty power to force them to be saved. He is 'mighty to save,' but He has a fixed way of salvation, which is declared by our Saviour in John vi. 40, 37, 'This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.' 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.' It is clear by comparison of these verses with John

x. 26—29, and xvii. 6, 9, ‘Ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all.’ ‘I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me’—that ‘all that the Father giveth’ the Son, to be His saved sheep, cannot be ‘all men.’ The sheep whom here the Shepherd of souls goeth after until He find it, for the same reason cannot be taken to mean any and every lost soul hereafter. Nor dare we overlook the fact that He spoke not only of sheep, but also of goats.

Moreover, such arguments as this one under notice are most misleading, resting on assumptions, and not conformed to the known facts of God’s government; for in this fashion it might also be argued that, as God is love, He must have been willing, and, as He is almighty, He must have been able, to keep Satan and his angels from sin, or to bring him and them back to holiness long ago; to keep sin and death out of the garden of Eden; to save the old world, instead of destroying

all mankind except eight souls ; to save mankind by less awful means than the death of His only begotten Son on the cross ; but behold the facts !

6th. *That fuller probation, under fairer or better conditions, is needed for a large portion of mankind than is, or can be, obtained in this world.*

God's Word does not speak thus, but says, 'To-day,' 'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found' (Isa. lv. 6). It is plainly written that 'it is appointed unto men once to die, but after death the judgment' (Heb. ix. 27); it is also plain that probation must be before judgment; this is and must be so by the nature of things, as all reason demands ; but this argument in behalf of 'a fuller probation' upsets the order of reason, and puts probation after judgment. Moreover, if a second probation for those who fail in the first, why not a third for those who may fail in the second, or a fourth, or a fifth, or a seventy-seventh? And after a second or other probation, what could there be but a judgment according to the deeds done? and this is what will be in *the* day of judgment after this present life of probation.

7th. *That by restoration of the lost, grace does much more abound, and God is glorified.*

Grace does already much more abound, in that whosoever believeth in the Son hath life. God is glorified, and will be—both by salvation and by condemnation, His love and His holiness will be magnified in the day of righteous judgment.

8th. *That hard-hearted theologians may reject this opinion of restoration, but that loving and Christ-like minds accept it gladly, and will not give it up.*

‘Everlasting punishment’ is not a mere man-made phrase or technical term; no fallible theologian, but He who is the Truth, is the author of the words. Men may accept or reject His words—to Him they stand or fall; but this we know, that ministers of Christ, as tender-hearted as any men who have ever lived, have felt constrained, in simple faithfulness to God and to man, to preach, even weeping, what was preached in our text by their Master.

*Note.*—When a Restorationist would warn the wicked, he is obliged to use almost the very language he denounces, and to lower his former

vehement confidence to 'you may be saved,' 'may,' 'may,' 'I cannot say.'

9th. *That spiritual instinct is a safer guide than dogmatic theology, and that such instinct decides for restoration.*

Nothing is more uncertain than this. What some may regard as their spiritual instinct may reject *all* future punishment; and, looking back, they may reject the accounts given us in Holy Scripture of God's judgments in the past, as inconsistent with their idea of what God is or ought to be.

10th. *That learned and good men have held Universalism or Restoration.*

Learned and good men not a few have erred not a little even in matters pertaining to the faith. Origen and Clemens Alexandrinus in the third century, Gregory of Nazianzum, Gregory of Nyssa, and Ambrose in the fourth century, with others of less note, are claimed as teaching more or less distinctly Restoration. Origen takes the first place as the most complete in statement of the fancies which

others adopted; he taught purification of the soul by fire, and that the evil angels may be restored to happiness; and yet he seems to doubt his own speculations, and speaks thus:—

*De Principiis*, Book I., chap. vi. 3: ‘But whether any of these orders who act under the government of the devil, and obey his wicked commands, will in a future world be converted to righteousness because of their possessing the faculty of freedom of will, or whether persistent and inveterate wickedness may be changed by the power of habit into nature, is a result which you yourself, reader, may approve of.’

*Against Celsus*, Book viii. 39: ‘And finally as to the punishments threatened against the ungodly; these will come upon them after they have refused all remedies, and have been, as we may say, visited with an incurable malady of sinfulness.’

The sober Church historian, Mosheim, thus describes the leader of the Universalists—‘Origen unquestionably stands at the head of the interpreters of the Bible in this century. But with pain it must be added, that he was first among those who have found in the Scriptures a secure retreat for errors and idle fancies of all kinds.’

11th. *That we must believe Restoration of the lost, or give up belief of the inspiration of the Bible.*

There is such a feeling, and one, a preacher, giving expression to the thoughts of many, said he would shut the Bible, and never open it again, rather than believe in eternal hell-fire. It was not well that he so felt, but perhaps it is well that he so spoke, for such words show the peril of allowing Universalist opinions to get a hold of the mind. For a long time the attempt may be honestly made to hold the inspiration of the Scriptures along with Universalism or Restoration ; but the day may come when the conviction is forced upon the mind, that everlasting punishment is the teaching of Holy Writ ; then there is danger, great danger, that the conclusion may be taken—‘ So much worse for the Bible : if I cannot keep my Universalist opinions with the Bible, I will keep them without it.’

12th. *That we must believe restoration of the lost, or give up our belief in the goodness of God. As examples of this feeling, may be quoted the words of one who said, ‘ To disbelieve it [restoration] would be for me to cease altogether either to trust or to worship*

*God;’ and of another who said, ‘I acknowledge my inability to admit this belief [of everlasting punishment] together with a belief of the Divine goodness.’*

Such utterances as these ought to sound an alarm in the souls of all Christians who have been parleying and dallying with Restoration or Universalism in any shape; for if a man, so thinking as these men have spoken, be at last compelled to admit that God’s Word does declare everlasting punishment, at once he is on the slippery brink of atheism, and the more logical he is, the more will he be tempted to say, ‘Then such a God I refuse to obey or believe.’

Having now considered various arguments in behalf of Restoration and Universalism, I commend to your serious thoughts some general observations.

(1) Restoration, or the final salvation of all mankind, is an opinion which suits corrupt human nature; therefore it is sure to have some success. The fact that it does suit corrupt human nature ought to put Christians on their guard against its professions.

(2) Restoration commends itself to the ungodly, for manifest reasons: impunity for transgression is one chief object of their search in this world; if they



can hear this impunity, or anything like unto it, promised by the Church's ministers, they will hail the doctrine with glee, applaud the preachers, and in fatal security go on still in their trespasses.

(3) Restoration suits the softness of the self-indulgent age in which we live, when so many seem to think that the greatest of all evils is pain, and man's highest good to be refined ease.

(4) Restoration commends itself to gentle and amiable natures, who shrink from what it is the duty of a father, and much more from what it is the duty of a ruler and a judge, to do: they cannot value aright the exercise of earthly law and justice, much less the Divine principles of eternal moral law; their maintenance and manifestation in 'righteous judgment.'

(5) Restoration seems to magnify the Father's love, the Son's atonement, and the Spirit's working; therefore it commends itself to some Christians; but let such bethink them that the sure way to magnify the Lord is to tremble at His word (Isa. lxvi. 2, 6); to add not thereto, nor diminish therefrom, but to receive it with meekness and faith.

(6) Restoration as it is set forth by its advocates

is in fact purgatory; only, going far beyond the Romish doctrine, this scheme makes Gehenna one vast purgatory. In a volume of sermons lately published to promote this doctrine, it is said in so many words—‘Restore the ancient belief in an intermediate state:’ our Church in the 22nd Article has condemned and cast out the whole doctrine of Purgatory, and now seeing this demand for its being brought back and replaced among the articles of our faith, we have too much reason for saying that Universalism or Restoration is a strange link between the opposite errors of Romanism and Infidelity.

(7) If the Divine intention was to teach by the Holy Scriptures Universalism or Restoration, the language employed seems marvellously unsuited to the purpose; so much so that, as a general rule, for eighteen centuries the Church has taken the words to mean, that after the great day of judgment there will be no restoration; that the sentence will be final, the punishment everlasting.

(8) The silence of Holy Writ as to any resurrection after ‘the second death’ is a most solemn and instructive fact. We read in Rev. xx. 14, ‘Death and hell (Hades) were cast into the lake of fire.’

This is the second death.' The meaning of these dread words appears to be—that after the general judgment natural death will be merged in (the second, *i.e.*) spiritual death, alienation from God in unforgiven sin; and Hades, the place of temporary custody and waiting, merged in Gehenna, the place of everlasting imprisonment.

Finally, brethren, be exhorted to faith and joy in Christ, who is our life, our peace, our hope. Bless your God and Father, love Him for His love in sending His only Son, who delivers us from the wrath to come, and for the assurance of the Holy Spirit, that 'there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' Keep close, very close, to the words of Holy Scripture, when speaking of the future punishment of the ungodly. Practise a reverent caution in handling the words of God, and as reverent a silence where He has not spoken. Bow every thought and wish in lowliest submission to the Divine word and will; and if aught the Judge of all the earth hath said seem to you a hard saying, be this your answer to yourselves—'It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.'

## LECTURE V.

## PUNISHMENT, ITS NATURE, PURPOSES, AND EFFECTS.

‘But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.’—ROM. ii. 2—6, 12.

To the end that we may, as regards the great matters before us, act on our Lord’s precept—‘Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment’—it is necessary that we have correct thoughts concerning the nature, purposes,

and effects of punishment; to study which aright we must go back to the beginning.

God has perfect free-will. It pleased Him to create intelligent beings capable of learning and doing His will, of knowing and reflecting His attributes, of receiving and returning His love,—to their happiness and to His glory. In creatures of such high order and glorious capacities the perfection of their service of love consists in its being yielded unto God, who is love, in liberty; that is to say, they must, like the Parent of their being, have free-will. Free-will carried with its celestial dignity the possibility of being abused: the creature might will in opposition to the will of the Creator; so to will would be sin; for, just as any departure from a straight line must be crookedness,—the Creator's will being perfect rectitude and goodness,—any opposition to His will must be evil; rebellion against the Creator, ruin to the creature.

Heavenly beings, angels, did so abuse their free-will. Also human beings, men, made in the likeness of God, did abuse their free-will.

Then sin became a fact in God's kingdom; then punishment became a necessity. God, the Holy,

the Good, cannot be indifferent to evil, and as Ruler of the universe He cannot be tolerant of rebellion. No revolt, whether great or small, in heaven or earth, can be committed with impunity; it cannot be hidden from Him, for He is all-knowing; it cannot succeed, for He is almighty.

‘The angels that sinned’ He ‘spared not;’ sin began with them, *in* them, Satan, it would seem, being the first: they were without excuse, not being tempted by others older and more subtle than themselves; we find not any offer or hope of pardon held out to them.

But our first parents were tempted by the liar and murderer; therefore we are, though guilty, yet not *as* guilty as the Tempter, and to us is graciously offered a way of return to life and salvation, to reunion with the living God, and that way is declared thus, ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. . . . As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made

the righteousness of God in Him' (2 Cor. v. 19—21). If this way of escape from sin and sin's effects be passed by, there is none other; God's love and salvation being rejected or neglected, God's wrath and punishment are brought down upon the sinner by that sinner's own free will and deed.

Before the throne of God are set two cups, one is the 'cup of salvation,' full and running over; round its golden foot is graven, 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Rev. xxii. 17). Whosoever will not so take of this one, must drink of the other, which is 'the cup of His indignation,' full 'of the wine of the wrath of God' (Rev. xiv. 17). God's love and His wrath are both to be proclaimed, by His messengers, to every creature. As many as pass away from this world without hearing of God's way of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, who 'died for the ungodly,'—they will be dealt with according to their knowledge and obedience or disobedience to such law as they had, even that 'law written in their hearts;' thus it is clearly laid down in our text and the context—their punishment will be in just proportion to their transgression. In all this there is nothing arbitrary, tyrannical,

nor in any way contrary to our own sense of justice.

God Himself affirms that punishment is part of His dealings with men: 'I will punish you seven times more for your sins' (Lev. xxvi.) 'I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity' (Isa. xiii. 11).

Punishment has, at least, three elements—first, the reforming; second, the deterring; third, the retributive, or, in the right sense of the word, the avenging. The first specially concerns the offender, the second the innocent, the third the Law-giver. As illustrating the first, see 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, 'If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him.' An example of the second is in Deut. xxi. 18—21, 'If when they have chastened him he will not hearken to them, his father and mother shall say, This our son is stubborn and rebellious. . . . And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die; so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.' The third is expressed in the words of Deut. xxxii. 35,




repeated in Rom. xii. 19, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.' The reforming and the deterring elements of punishment are owned by all who call themselves Christians, but there is a remarkable refusal to admit the existence of the retributive or avenging ; whether this be from ignorance alone, or from some other motive or bias, we shall not now enquire ; but from this defective conception of punishment, its third element being left out of sight, there spring serious errors as to the whole subject under our consideration.

It has been said, '*All punishment is educational, purgatorial, remedial in its object.*' '*His æonian fire is the fire of love ; it is to purify, not to torture ; it is to melt, and not to burn. God Himself tells us that "He afflicteth not willingly, but for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness ;" but could it be "for our profit" to be tortured for ever in a hopeless hell ?*'

Beside the begging the question, or gross assumption in this statement, observe that the passage quoted from Heb. xii. 10 is addressed, as the context shows, to Christians chastened in this life ; and that

there is not the slightest hint, much less any warrant, in the chapter for applying it to the wicked punished in the 'everlasting fire.'

Now suppose a case; a criminal whose guilt is proved; suppose moreover that it is known for a certainty that no punishment which can be inflicted on him will have the least educational, purgatorial, or remedial influence on himself, nor any, even the smallest deterring influence on others. Should this malefactor be set at liberty unpunished? Natural justice in our consciences will cry out, No; reform or no reform to himself, warning or no warning to others, a fresh evil will be done if this evil-doer receive not the punishment his evil deeds deserve. We will ask, 'Why?' The reply may be, 'Because society must be protected from such enemies to the common welfare.' We say, Good, though not the whole truth, that is true; and the welfare of the spiritual commonwealth, the peace and the purity of 'the whole family in heaven and earth,' may require that not one transgressor against the holy law of God escape His righteous judgment; and that to guard effectually and for ever against the entrance of evil into that holy family, love



itself, the 'righteous Father's love,' may banish all the unholy angels and men 'into everlasting punishment.'

But, it is argued, *Vindictive punishment may suit fierce and cruel natures; it cannot be allowed or practised by Christians, much less then can it be inflicted by Him who said, 'Avenge not yourselves.'*

Vindictive is a word carrying two meanings—one bad, the other good. Private or personal vengeance is forbidden, with all other uncharitableness; but public, ministerial, judicial vengeance is a solemn duty—to vindicate the right, to avenge the wrong. Subjects are forbidden by the State to take the law into their own hands; so we are forbidden by God the Supreme Ruler to avenge ourselves; but with this He immediately couples, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord' (Rom. xii. 19). See also Luke xviii. 6—8: 'Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect? . . . I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.' And Rom. xiii. 4: 'He beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to (execute) wrath upon him that doeth

evil.' And the awfully-distinct words of Heb. x. 28—31: 'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge His people. (It is) a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'

Again it is argued—'*If it would be wholly impossible for any wretch among us to be so remorseless as to doom his deadliest enemy to an endless vengeance, are we to believe this of God? to believe that He who planted mercy in us is merciless . . . ?*'

This is a false analogy. The righteous judgment of God must not be compared with the sinful personal hatred of a cruel man. God is 'merciful and gracious,' but when He proclaimed Himself, at Sinai, as 'forgiving iniquity and transgression

and sin,' then it was He also declared He 'will by no means clear (the guilty)' (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7 ; see also Nahum i. 2, 3.) An earthly judge, as a minister of the law, is a 'revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil,' although in his private capacity he must not avenge himself; but 'the Judge of all the earth' is Himself the living law, and as such He is, and (reverently be it said) He must be, merciless, remorseless in His hatred of sin. Deut. xiii. and xix. 13 should also be noted.

The opponents of everlasting punishment commonly assume that sin ends with this life's ending; but sinners unconverted, unsanctified, and continuing to exist beyond the grave, must continue in sin, and so continue to incur punishment. Great is the force of our Lord's saying, 'Ye shall die in your sins' (John viii. 24).

It has been said, '*The continuance of suffering after it is hopeless in respect to the individual, and needless in respect to society, is simply cruelty.*'

Although effecting no spiritual improvement in the condemned, everlasting punishment may be for great good as regards the everlasting vindication of righteous law, and the welfare of the whole

kingdom of God. And even if there be no deterring effect produced by everlasting punishment in the condemned, there may be an everlasting warning conveyed by that righteous judgment, which God may sanctify and use to deter other intelligent creatures from sin ; the folly and failure of sin, its curse and condemnation being set forth as facts proven, and bearing eternal testimony to the universe that there is 'no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord,' and that 'the wages of sin is death.'

Before passing to another portion of our subject it will be in place here to add a list of words rendered by 'vengeance,' 'revenge,' 'avenge,' 'avenger,' 'revenger.'

*Dikē* occurs four times :—

Acts xxv. 15 : 'Desiring to have *judgment* against him.'

Acts xxviii. 4 : 'A murderer, whom *vengeance* suffereth not to live.'

2 Thess. i. 9 : '*Shall be punished* with everlasting destruction.'

Jude 7 : 'Suffering the *vengeance* of eternal fire.'

*Ekdikēsis* occurs nine times :—

Luke xviii. 7 : 'Shall not God *avenge* His own elect?'

Luke xviii. 8 : ' He will *avenge* them speedily.'

Luke xxi. 22 : ' These be the days of *vengeance*.'

Acts vii. 24 : ' Moses *avenged* him that was oppressed.'

Rom. xii. 19 : ' *Vengeance* is mine ; I will repay.'

2 Cor. vii. 11 : ' Yea (what) zeal, yea (what) *revenge* !'

2 Thess. i. 8 : ' In flaming fire taking *vengeance*.'

Heb. x. 30 : ' *Vengeance* unto me, I will recompense.'

1 Pet. ii. 14 : ' Governors . . . for the *punishment* of evil-doers.'

*Ekdikos* occurs twice :—

Rom. xiii. 4 : ' A *revenger* to wrath upon him that doeth evil.'

1 Thess. iv. 6 : ' The Lord is the avenger of all such.'

*Ekdikeo* occurs six times :—

Luke xviii. 3 : ' *Avenge* me of mine adversary.'

Luke xviii. 5 : ' I will *avenge* her.'

Rom. xii. 19 : ' *Avenge* not yourselves.'

2 Cor. x. 6 : ' To *revenge* all disobedience.'

Rev. vi. 10 : ' Dost thou not judge and *avenge* our blood ?'

Rev. xix. 2 : ' He hath *avenged* the blood of his servants.'

*Timoria* occurs once :—

Heb. x. 29 : ' Of how much sorer *punishment*.'

*Timoreo* occurs twice :—

Acts xxii. 5 : ' Unto Jerusalem for to be *punished*.'

Acts xxvi. 11 : ' I *punished* them oft in every synagogue.'

*Orgē* (wrath) occurs thirty-six times :—

Rom. iii. 5 : 'Is God unrighteous, who taketh *vengeance* ?

The strange assertion has been made, that '*Hell is a temper, not a place.*'

Temper cannot be taken as the meaning in those passages where the word is Hades, nor in those where Gehenna is the word. Try Acts ii. 27, 31 : Could we translate, 'His soul was not left in a *temper*' ? Try Luke xii. 5 : Could we read, 'Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into a *temper*' ? And was it a *temper* that was 'prepared for the devil and his angels' ? At the resurrection the evil-doers will have bodies as the righteous will; these bodies must have a place. It is certain that place, wherever and whatever it may be, will have conditions, and that the conditions will duly correspond to those who occupy it, to their bodily and spiritual conditions. We judge from all analogy that the place and its conditions will be such as befit punishment. Sins committed in the body will be punished in the body. It is evident that the constitution and organization of the resurrection-bodies will differ from those of



human bodies as they now are. The fire would destroy these present bodies, but does not consume or dissolve the future bodies. Here men under punishment or in pain often kill themselves ; there those who suffer punishment (and gnashing of teeth evidences anguish of mind or body, or of both) would annihilate themselves if they could ; but death will then have been cast into the lake of fire, therefore death will be impossible to them ; that is, they will not be able, though they may so desire, to escape, by extinction or annihilation, or destruction of existence, from the righteous judgment of God. He who created could annihilate them, but there is no proof that He will, whereas the tenor of Holy Scripture is against such a supposition. It is not necessary to seek support for this reasoning from the argument that the soul being simple, uncompounded, it cannot be dissolved.

*It is assumed that sinners condemned to 'æonian punishment' will suffer keenly ; but we know that many great criminals do not feel their guilt ; they dread bodily pain ; as to moral pain they seem to be 'past feeling.' In Gehenna, death would not be*

feared, it being dead ; and annihilation being impossible to them, it is difficult to say what they would suffer if there were no bodily punishment. It would be a strange thing, much like a miscarriage of justice, if the most guilty were the least suffering ; if they whose consciences had been seared could be as free from distress in body as from the anguish of regret, while they who were less hardened in sin would be tormented by the smart of conscience. Others there are who, in this life, suffer pangs of remorse sharp and frequent, yet have no ‘repentance toward God.’

We are advised to hold that ‘*the loss of the beatific vision is, far more than any physical torture, the essence of the sufferings of the lost,*’ and we are reminded that one eminent theologian, in the ninth century, made future punishment consist only in the absence of divine bliss.’

Such as those of whom we read in Matt. vii. and Luke xiii., who, expecting to be received into the kingdom of heaven, are, to their dismay, sent away by the Lord as workers of iniquity, will doubtless bewail with intensity of sorrow their loss ; but

there are others who in this life despise the beatific vision—it has no beauty in their eyes, that they should desire it. It is against experience, reason, and Scripture to think that they who in this world practically ‘say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways’ (Job xxi. 14), would bewail as their only or their chief punishment their not having the spiritual joy of seeing God. We gather from the Lord’s words that there are two causes of weeping and gnashing of teeth; the one because of what the condemned are cast out from, the other for what they are cast into. It is easy to rail at sulphurous sermons, but they who do so might at least remember that fire and brimstone mark God’s recorded deed in judgment past, and His declared purpose in the judgment future. He who destroyed Gomorrah and lit the volcanoes of earth, He knew what He meant when He spoke of the fire of Gehenna. Where ‘the lake of fire’ is;—whether in this planet’s vast interior, or in some penal orb rolling in the ‘outer darkness’ of space, afar from the home of God’s elect, it matters little now to know, ‘the day shall declare it.’

The following are the words translated 'torment,'  
'tormented,' 'tormentors' :—

*Basanizo* occurs twelve times :—

Matt. viii. 6 : 'Sick of the palsy, grievously *tormented*.'

Matt. viii. 29 : 'Art Thou come hither to *torment* us before  
the time ?'

Matt. xiv. 24 : 'In the midst of the sea, *tossed* with waves.'

Mark v. 7 : 'I adjure Thee that Thou *torment* me not.'

Mark vi. 48 : 'He saw them *toiling* in rowing.'

Luke viii. 28 : 'I beseech Thee *torment* me not.'

2 Pet. ii. 8 : '*Vexed* His righteous soul.'

Rev. ix. 5 : 'Should be *tormented* five months.'

Rev. xi. 10 : 'These two prophets *tormented* them.'

Rev. xii. 2 : 'In birth, and *pained* to be delivered.'

Rev. xiv. 10 : 'He shall be *tormented* with fire and brim-  
stone.'

Rev. xx. 10 : 'Shall be *tormented* day and night for ever  
and ever.'

*Basanismos* occurs six times :—

Rev. ix. 5 : 'Their *torment* as the *torment* of a scorpion.'

Rev. xiv. 11 : 'Smoke of their *torment* ascendeth up for  
ever and ever.'

Rev. xviii. 7 : 'So much *torment* and sorrow give her.'

Rev. xviii. 10 : 'Standing afar off for fear of her *torment*.'

Rev. xviii. 15 : 'Afar off for the fear of her *torment*,  
weeping and wailing.'

*Basanistēs* occurs once :—

Matt. xviii. 34 : 'Delivered him to the *tormentors*.'

*Basanos* occurs three times :—

Matt. iv. 24 : 'Taken with divers diseases and *torments*.'

Luke xvi. 23 : 'Lift up his eyes, being in *torments*.'

Luke xvi. 28 : 'Lest they also come into this place of *torments*.'

*Odunaomai* occurs four times :—

Luke ii. 48 : 'Thy father and I have sought thee *sorrowing*.'

Luke xvi. 24 : 'I am *tormented* in this flame.'

Luke xvi. 25 : 'Thou art *tormented*.'

Acts xx. 38 : '*Sorrowing* most of all for the words he spake.'

*Kakoukhomenos* occurs twice :—

Heb. xi. 37 : 'Destitute, afflicted, *tormented*.'

Heb. xiii. 3 : 'And them *which suffer adversity*.'

There is another word rendered by 'punish,'

*Kolazomai*, which occurs twice :—

Acts iv. 21 : 'Finding nothing how they might *punish* them.'

2 Pet. ii. 9 : 'Unto the day of judgment to be *punished*.'

And this leads us to the important word translated 'torment' and 'punishment,' namely,—

*Kolasis*, which occurs twice:—

1 John iv. 18 : 'Fear hath *torment*.'

Matt. xxv. 46 : 'Shall go away into everlasting *punishment*.'

It has been argued that *as this word kolasis means pruning,—correction or punishment for the improvement of the corrected, must be intended by the use of the word in Matt. xxv. 46.*

To say 'for the improvement' of those who are pruned is indeed an assumption, there being absolutely nothing to warrant it, but as to the pruning itself, this, if admitted to be the meaning in the said text, would but bring us to what our Lord says in John xv. 2—6, as to the taking away and burning of the branches that bear not fruit, and abide not in Him. Further, both in Greek apocryphal books, 1 Esdras viii. 24, 2 Maccabees iv. 38, and in classic authors, *e.g.*, Euripides and Lysias, *kolazo* and *kolasis* are used to express the punishment of death.

An unjustifiable assumption runs through the arguments of Restorationists; which is, that punish-

ment will at last bring the condemned to a right mind ; that the fire will burn out their corruption, and leave them pure and meet for the Master's use. But Pharaoh's case does not favour this notion, the experience learned in our prisons does not agree with it, and a different expectation is to be formed by pondering that which is shown in Rev. xx., where we read that Satan's imprisonment for a thousand years effects no improvement in him ; but after that he is found going forth again to deceive the nations and to meet his final punishment.

Punishment, of itself, has no power to convert sinners to God. He uses pains and various chastisements in this life, but it is by the Holy Spirit sanctifying these things that souls are brought to Christ and life in Him. It is of heathen philosophy to regard punishment as of itself purifying ; for instance, in Plato's *Gorgias* (171) one may find such a notion expressed thus: 'Their benefit, however, both here and in Hades, accrues to them through pains and torments ; for it is not possible to be freed from injustice in any other way.' Punishment may work remorse, but that is not

repentance ; conviction is not conversion. It is not enough to say, ' I have sinned,' Pharaoh said that ; it is not enough to cry, ' Lórd, Lord, open to us ;' that petition was rejected (Matt. vii. and xxv.). It is not enough to promise amendment,—not enough to believe there is a God : many such things as these we see in this life to proceed from those whose hearts are unchanged, as their actions prove.

It has been said of the rich man in Hades, that *'a moral renovation' had been 'rapidly' 'wrought' in his 'sinful selfish soul.'*

But there is no evidence of any such thing. His concern for his brethren was no more than many an utterly ungodly man feels. He asks that Lazarus may leave Abraham's bosom to come and comfort him, although he had done nothing on earth to comfort Lazarus ; he craves relief of the creature—there is no word of his asking pardon from God, nor confessing his sins to God.

A most awful fact is the power in human nature of resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts vii. 51), and this as far as we can see, without end or change, except



from sin to sin. We see in this world many on whom gifts and mercies, warnings and chastisements, threats and intreaties, tears and prayers, anger and love—all, all are lost. Punishment in this life often hardens; so much so, that some persons oppose all corporal punishment, because, they say, it only hardens the punished. Then punishment in the world to come may harden the condemned, harden them into most intense opposition against God and His laws. If, as we have seen it is said, the doctrine of everlasting punishment tends 'to drive some into indignant atheism,' it may be that future punishment in all its realities will be met with blasphemous hatred of Him and His whom they have resisted to their eternal ruin. 'Evil, be thou my good,' may be indeed their twice accursed resolve. Is there not such a feeling to be discerned even now lurking in the sinful heart, and ready to break forth in word and act?

Here 'evil men and seducers wax worse and worse;' it is reasonable to expect they will do so hereafter. Here evil-doers are, in some measure, kept in check by good influences round about them; there is nothing to show that there will be or can

be any such influences hereafter. Here there are transgressors for whom strict rule and bondage are really the best conditions for themselves ; thus and thus only are they restrained from greater evils ; may it not be so, for some, hereafter ? The analogy of Nature and of Revelation favours an opinion that the future conditions of both saved and lost will be far more complex than is generally imagined.

We believe that punishment of itself has no power to bring a sinner to God ; this is the work of the Holy Spirit, without whom ‘ no man can say that Jesus is the Lord ’ ( 1 Cor. xii. 3 ). It may be said, *Granted, but God will give the Holy Spirit to bless the punishment of the condemned, and lead them out of evil into good.*

God has not said that He will do so ; no man can say for God that He will. The Lord departed from Saul, so He does from others. Is God obliged to return to those from whom He has departed ? Is He obliged to do by His Holy Spirit what punishment cannot do ? Will it be necessary for Him to take away the free-will of the condemned, and so save them *without* their will ? or will it be neces-

sary for Him to overpower their free-will, and so save them *against* their will? Even if the Holy Spirit were to be sent into Gehenna to teach the condemned ; as He is resisted and quenched here, so might He be there. I cannot forget what I have seen, of wilful cleaving to sin, rushing back to iniquity, in spite of pain, punishment, warning, offers of opportunities and helps to live a better life. So it is to be believed sinners will hereafter, even as here, ‘love darkness rather than light.’

It has been argued, that *we learn from St. Peter, our Lord preached the Gospel to the dead in Hades, and therefore there is salvation for sinners beyond the grave ; and that we confess this belief by saying in the Creed, ‘He descended into Hell,’ because that article rests on the words of St. Peter.*

There is another passage on which these words of the Creed rest, Eph. iv. 8—10, “He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth ;” but let us look at the passages in 1 Pet. iii. 18—20 and iv. 6 : ‘Christ . . . quickened by the Spirit : by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in

prison ; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah. . . . For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit.' If we admit that the reference in both these texts is to a publishing by our Lord in Hades, between His death and resurrection, of His Gospel and His propitiatory death for sinners, it does not follow that any spirits there kept in ward repented then, who had not repented on earth. The spirits 'sometime were disobedient,' namely, 'in the days of Noah;' it is not said the spirits were those of all who perished in the flood ; it is reasonable to think that in that time many repented at the last, as certain death approached them, and that to these spirits the Lord proclaimed salvation in Him ; their past repentance finding then present acceptance by virtue of His atonement.

Suppose a condemned sinner, one whose natural enmity against God the weight of punishment in Gehenna's depth has but condensed into adamant hardness of impenitent desperation, refusing to

humble himself, to sue for pardon, or to own his guilt. What then? Must that unholy one, all corrupt and corrupting, be received into the place of the holy—unchanged? By standing out against God, will this reprobate carry his point, and gain admission into the inheritance of the saints on his own terms? If he could do this, then they who have come out of great tribulation, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, might say, ‘Verily we have cleansed our hearts in vain, and washed our hands in innocency;’ then evil would triumph over good, and the universe would know it; then the Creator would have to submit to the creature, that rebel would have broken the sceptre of righteousness, and emptied the throne of God.

If it be said, *In Gehenna there would not be opportunity or means for committing sin*, we answer, The inward opportunity of sin is never absent, heart sin, memory sin, imagination sin, desire sin—for these the means are always ready; moreover, not to love God, not to love the neighbour, this is sin, and it is written, ‘If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema’ (2 Cor. xvi. 22).

We may be asked, *What of the very many who are not so wicked as to deserve eternal condemnation, but are not fit yet to be received into the holy place;—who are described roughly as—too good for hell, not good enough for heaven?*

The answer is easy, Holy Scripture gives no account of such. We read of two classes, 'just and unjust,' 'alive' and 'dead,' 'written' and 'not written in the book of life,' 'blessed' and 'cursed'; we read of being 'accepted in the Beloved,' and again, 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His' (Rom. viii. 9). If the Scriptures know not a third class between these two, neither can we know such.

We may reasonably think that they who are accepted in Christ will, after they go hence, continue to be taught and purified by the Holy Spirit in a better place, who will perfect in them there His work begun here. All schemes of purgatory have added to their error this evil,—that while they hold out ungrounded hope to the ungodly, they darken the sure hope of the justified by cloudy teaching of some fiery cleansing to be suffered before they who are washed in His blood can be

with Christ ;—whereas He assured His disciples, ‘He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit’ (John xiii. 10).

Keeping close to facts in all these reasonings ; the facts of Holy Scripture, of human nature, and of experience, we come to the solemn conclusions that everlasting punishment is a declaration of God’s Word, is a requirement of His holy government, and that it does, while fulfilling His justice, minister withal to the purposes of His everlasting love.

## LECTURE VI.

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, WARNINGS.

‘He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.’—JOHN iii. 36.

IN this the last of the set it will be well to give a summary of the foregoing lectures, to state general conclusions, and to add some exhortations for practical guidance.

I. We have seen that everlasting punishment was an article of Jewish belief in the time of the Apostles, and was so, independently of their preaching; that from those days to these this doctrine has been generally accepted by the universal Church; that although there have been exceptions in early and in later ages, there has been such an agreement among all Christians in this belief, that we, who hold the same, have not to justify its introduction, seeing it has prevailed in the Church from the



beginning ; but they who oppose the doctrine have to show cause why it should now be cast out.

II. We have weighed their arguments, and we find them utterly insufficient to justify the attacks made on the doctrine and on those by whom it is held ; being, although plausible in form, and sometimes violent in tone, either misrepresentations of the doctrine, or partial and defective statements of some true things as if they were the whole truth ; or setting some portions of Holy Scripture in opposition to others ; or assumptions without any warrant for them, as to what the Almighty will do and will not do ; or exciting appeals to feelings and imaginations, instead of sober reasoning, according to known facts ; or scarcely disguised contradictions of what has been declared by the Divine Judge Himself ; His authoritative words being treated as if they were the faulty additions of erring men ; or most perilous rationalising attempts to make the word of God of none effect, by giving authority as great as that which it alone possesses, to human conscience, reason, and opinion.

III. Particular examination has been made of an old opinion, lately revived, and put forth with much

vain confidence by its supporters,—that sooner or later the wicked will be put completely out of existence; it being further asserted that it is a mistake to regard man as naturally immortal, for that he can only attain to immortality by saving union with ‘Christ who is our life.’ It has been made evident to you that this opinion is itself one long mistake; that its seeming strength is derived from a remarkable confusion of words and meanings, the proper distinctions not being made between self-existence and derived existence; between ‘natural’ as established by the Creator, and ‘natural’ as if it were independent of Him; between immortality of the body and endless existence; between death natural and death spiritual, living for ever and ‘eternal life;’ between annihilation or extinction of being, and destruction spiritual. The texts brought forward to support extinction of the wicked are consistent with themselves, and with the rest of Holy Scripture, when interpreted as meaning, not annihilation, but spiritual death in sin, separation from the living God, everlasting ruin of the creature’s moral *well-being*.

IV. Next we turned our attention to another

opinion, as much opposed to annihilation as to everlasting punishment; which is, that all the wicked, after enduring purifying chastisement, will be received into the favour of God and the blessings of His kingdom. This also is an old notion which has many supporters in the present day. The assertions by which they have attempted to weaken the force of 'everlasting,' 'for ever and ever,' 'condemn,' 'condemnation,' 'judgment,' 'punishment,' 'Gehenna,' we have tested by examination and comparison of the passages in which these words (or rather the original Greek terms, of which they are translations) occur in the New Testament; the result of this investigation is, that we find these terms, especially 'everlasting' and 'for ever and ever,' so frequently employed by the inspired writers and others to express the greatest possible fulness of meaning, that neither Bible nor dictionary will allow us to be persuaded by the special pleading of those who, in seeking to deprive these words of their power, appear to be trying, though some of them may not intend so to do, to blunt by the files of a false criticism the edge of 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'

V. Leaving these rival disputers, the Extinctionists and the Restorationists, to do as did the two sets of young men of whom we read in 2 Samuel ii. 13—16, that ‘they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow’s side; so they fell down together;’ we passed on to consider the nature, purposes, and effects of punishment. In so doing, and following the lines marked out in the Holy Scriptures, and illustrated by the facts of human nature and of experience, we came to regard as settled the following points: The being made in the likeness of God included the endowment of endless existence and free-will: free-will must, by its very nature, be capable of sin: by free-will abused sin was taken into the heart, and by the same freewill is there kept. God must, by His nature, punish sin. Sin, if not taken away, must, in creatures possessing endless existence, become ‘everlasting sin.’ Everlasting sin must, for the purpose of God’s moral government, be visited with ‘everlasting punishment.’ Punishment has no power of itself to purify. Only the Holy Spirit of the Creator can renew the creature in holiness. We are not au-

thorized by the Word of God to expect, much less to promise, that the Holy Spirit, resisted in this world by them, will work in sinners hereafter ; on the contrary, we gather from Holy Writ that He will give them over to a reprobate mind (Rom. i. 28) ; and what they sowed in time, *that* He will leave them to reap in eternity. The purposes of everlasting punishment must be consistent with perfect righteousness, and God's fatherly kindness is not contradicted by His judicial vengeance on sin. One of the purposes may be to take everlasting security against the entrance of sin any more into the family of God, and this is in accordance with holy love. The effects of everlasting punishment, though not remedial or purifying as it concerns the lost, may be for everlasting good in warning other intelligent beings to take heed lest they fall ; and in giving everlasting proof that the free-will of the creature is safe only when centred in the Creator, that no rebellion against ' the blessed and only Potentate ' can prosper ; that sin is madness and ruin, and separation from God is spiritual death.

In the course of our study we have seen and exposed divers false reasonings put forward to

oppose the doctrine of everlasting punishment; now we may bring nearly all of them (one might say all) under one or other of the following ground-errors:—

1. Underrating God's holiness and His consequent hatred of sin.

2. Underrating His character as the Ruler and Judge.

3. Underrating sin's malignity, obstinacy, and desert.

4. Underrating the power and responsibility of free-will in men which are made after the similitude of God who liveth for ever.

5. One-sided and therefore deceitful handling of the Word of God, taking part as if it were the whole, or magnifying one portion and diminishing other portions, or practically taking away one part to give unbounded extension to some other part or parts adjoining.

6. Appealing from known facts to imaginings, feelings, and prejudices.

7. Assuming that Christ's death, which is *sufficient* for all, is *savingly efficient* for all; that it was intended by God to be thus universally effectual

for salvation, and that the Divine plan would fail or be defeated by the Evil One if every soul of man be not saved.

As a minister of Christ, I must take good heed to know and to do my duty in this matter. I must search the Scriptures, and keep close to them: if at any time in doubt or difficulty as to what the words of Holy Writ may mean, my safest course will be to repeat these very words as God has thought fit to give them, and trust Him to justify and bless them. I must note the facts of human nature and experience. I must beware of fancies and inclinations, whether in my own mind or in the minds of others. I must not allow my reason, no, nor my conscience, to impose on me anything not in keeping with the oracles of God. I must submit both conscience and reason to be instructed by God's Word, and to be regulated by His Spirit. I must pay due respect both to the revelations and the reservations of Holy Scripture. I must not seek to be wise above that which is written as to the righteous judgment of God, intruding into those things which man hath not seen. I must remember

that God's 'judgments are a great deep' (Ps. xxxvi. 6), and that, both of grace and of judgment, 'the secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever' (Deut. xxix. 29). Moreover, I must check, and at the same time comfort, myself by recollecting that 'now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known.' Sure I am that some things I must not say, because I can find no warrant for saying them.

1. I must not say, the punishment of the wicked will have or may have an end, either by their annihilation or restoration.

2. I must not say, the ungodly and disobedient shall have another 'chance' or a second probation after this life.

3. I must not limit the Father's love by any cold or narrow words, reflecting human selfishness or uncharitableness.

4. I must not limit the King's judgment by any presumptuous plea, as if mortal man could be more righteous or more merciful than his Maker.

5. I must not deliver as God's threatenings the



dark or passionate fancies of men, expressed in bitter language as from uncircumcised lips.

6. I must not offer, as if they were God's promises, the ignorant wishes or false charity of sinful men, who know not the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as He knows it, nor the awful necessities of His righteous government.

7. I must not be ashamed nor afraid to declare what the Lord hath declared, nor shrink from repeating any word which He has uttered ; yet, when duty calls me to speak of the 'everlasting fire,' I ought to speak as becometh one who by grace is 'plucked from the burning.'

Such, brethren, I take to be my duty, and not mine only, but the duty of all ministers of the New Testament, and this for many reasons :—

1. For fidelity as servants and messengers of our Master.

2. For agreement with the general belief of the universal Church.

3. For scholarship and literary honesty.

4. For the sake of the obedient, that they be not distracted by erroneous and strange doctrine.

5. For the sake of the disobedient. Ministers

may err by easiness as well as by harshness of doctrine. Origen's admission is to be noticed ; he thought it not prudent to speak out to the multitude his notions as to the temporary nature of punishment, lest they who were already so unrestrained should be still more reckless in sin. His opinions were condemned by others in the Church who first heard them, it seems they were thus practically condemned by himself who first conceived them. To make sad the righteous is a grievous fault, but it is not less a fault to 'strengthen the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way' (Ezek. xiii. 22).

6. For our own sake, remembering the account we must give of our stewardship. The unjust steward made friends of his lord's debtors by showing them how to make their liabilities seem less than they were : to the dishonest this would be doubtless a 'popular' course ; from such friendship and popularity may our Lord ever preserve us and all the 'stewards of the mysteries of God' !

Whosoever they be who take the lead in rejecting and reviling the doctrine of everlasting punishment, how many soever they be who follow them, what-

soever things be said to make it appear hateful or contemptible, and to recommend annihilation, universalism, or some other opposition, as more rational or more attractive, 'it maketh no matter to me.' 'Preach the word' is the command, and to this a prediction is added,—'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; . . . they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables' (2 Tim. iv. 2—4).

If it be said, Men may not seek an unworthy popularity, nor intend any slight to the Word of God, by opposing the belief of everlasting punishment, and teaching that there is good hope for the damned, a restoration of the cursed to blessing, a resurrection from the second death unto holy life with the spirits of just men made perfect; the answer is, True, many may not seek such praise of men, yet they are sure by these men-pleasing doctrines to have such praise, and this is a dangerous snare. They may not intend to dishonour the Word, nevertheless they may be insulting the majesty of Divine Truth. There is reason to think that many of them are not aware how much their reason is warped by their wish; they argue in

seeming soundness of intellect, yet, all the while, are the unconscious subjects of a deceit practised on the judgment by an excited imagination. Men in darkness and peril, straining their eyes in looking for distant lights, often fancy they see the beams they long for ; so there are some, who, trying to peer into the night of eternal judgment which follows the day of salvation, cry out now and again that they see rays of eternal hope shining through the gloom. If I be asked whether I can perceive any such thing or not, I solemnly reply, I have looked long, and if I could espy one such ray, however distant or however dim, gladly would I point it out ; but over the place of those who have been banished thither from 'the Sun of righteousness' all I can see is 'the blackness of darkness for ever' (Jude 13). 'He that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him' (John iii. 36).

I have spoken of the minister's duty, let me now speak of the people's, and give you, brethren, some counsels of warning and exhortation for yourselves.

1. Beware of taking the thoughts of men for the

thoughts of God. Let your rule be—‘Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.’ ‘My heart standeth in awe of Thy word.’

2. Lean not on learned men, no, nor on good men, but seek to learn of Him, and to obey Him, who is ‘the Truth.’ Let His words be your patterns in this matter.

3. Beware lest your hearts, which are deceitful, pervert your judgments, and dispose you to turn away from the words of truth and soberness. It is our duty to declare unto you all the words of God; it is equally your duty to receive them all with meekness and faith.

4. Do not esteem it a small thing whether you keep or do not keep the belief of everlasting punishment; the same motives which move some to reject this belief may urge them on to the rejecting of truth after truth till none may remain.

5. Do not hide your eyes from this dread subject, or say, as do some, We neither believe nor deny, because we do not know, cannot know, anything about it; therefore we ask nothing, say nothing, think nothing concerning the matter. No, for the sake of your own souls do not thus; for God has

given revelations, as full and as clear as He thought fit, of the future punishment of the ungodly, and now to treat His words as if He had not spoken, would be dire peril to you and contempt of Him.

6. Let not the fervours and flowers of enticing words or ornamental composition beguile you. The gaudiest colours are often used to hide the poorest material ; the flimsiest tissues may be dyed and loaded till they seem to be marvels of richness ; yet are they but rottenness in warp and woof.

7. Let not earnestness and sincerity impose on you, for these prove nothing but themselves ; men have been thoroughly sincere in believing all sorts of errors and lies, and earnest beyond measure in spreading them.

8. Do not discuss the great matters now before us in any excitement of feeling, controversial or emotional ; for these, more than most subjects, need the exercise, by a sound mind, of calm thought and close reasoning, that we may attain to a right judgment.

9. Distress not yourselves about the decrees and sentences of Him who is the righteous Judge. Be assured that hereafter, even as now, Divine mercy

shall have as full and glorious exercise as is consistent with Divine justice, truth, and holiness.

10. Many there are who practically say to the ambassadors of the Great King, "Cause the Holy One to cease from us," tell us only of the Merciful One; we will stop our ears, or hasten away, if you speak of 'wrath to come;' we *will* have a *genial* gospel preached to us, *or* we will have *none*. Beware of joining in this cry; let it not win from you any concession or any excuse. There is a passage written by the last prophet of the old dispensation; his words suit in these later days for a warning to some who wish for 'another gospel': 'Ye have wearied the Lord with your words; yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?' (Mal. ii. 17.)

11. Be not troubled nor shaken in mind by the things you have read and heard elsewhere, or may yet meet, concerning future punishment. You have no need to fear that the doctrine here defended is contrary to the Bible or to your Church. Loud outcries may be made against this doctrine; weak

and unstable souls may be carried away by clamour or fair speeches ; they who have rejected that which has been believed by the wise and holy of all churches as the teaching of Holy Scripture may pity your ignorance, or rebuke your bigotry ; but walk in the old paths, and ‘in your patience possess ye your souls.’

On the whole, belief of everlasting punishment has been the rule in all ages of the Church ; any contrary opinions, such as Annihilation and Universalism, have been the exceptions : but now, by making as little as possible of the rule, and as much as possible of the exceptions ; by disputes and special pleadings as to the meaning of words ; by a show of learning ; by a prodigal amount of assertion, with not a little self-assertion ; by false analogies and misleading illustrations, by assumption and presumption, by passionate declamation and snatches of poetry, by magnifying charity and accusing the orthodox of uncharitableness,—by these and by various other small arts it is possible so to darken this subject, as by the smoke of burning stubble, that the facts cannot be seen as they are ; but step aside, look steadily with reverent con-



templation, and the awful truths stand out like the headlands of some far-stretching coast beneath a thunder-laden sky.

We have come to the end; let us return to the beginning, to our first text. God grant us grace to know all His teachings, to obey all His commands, to believe all His promises, to love Him for His love, and to fear Him for His righteous judgments. Let us, with lowly confidence, leave all the dark problems and terrible secrets of the future to Him, and 'striving to make our calling and election sure,' let us beseech the careless to be reconciled to God, that they and we may be heirs together of eternal life. Let us wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead; and, while we wait, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory in Him, even 'Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.'

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